

South Africa:

A new U.S. approach



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The **TOWER** **OMISSION**

The story
they didn't tell.

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Six candidates, one House seat

By David Moberg

SAN FRANCISCO

The congressional district encompassing most of this traditionally diverse city is as far out of the mainstream politically as it is geographically.

Against the grain it has voted overwhelmingly for George McGovern, Walter Mondale and controversial California Supreme Court Chief Justice Rose Bird. Following Rep. Sala Burton's death on February 1, 14 candidates have entered a short special primary race, but one of the six Democrats will be the next representative. And as Mitchell Omerberg, area director for Tom Hayden's Campaign California, says, "Anyone who runs for this office who's not a moron will take liberal positions."

That was evident at a recent candidate forum. One of the three leading contenders for "conservative" votes called for "nationalizing the doctors." Another bragged that he had introduced the toughest municipal toxics law in the country. The third stressed the need for controlling the export of capital overseas.

Moreover, the candidate with as strong a chance as any in what will probably be a very close race is a local member of the Board of Supervisors (city council) who has long been out of the political and sexual closet as an open gay and a democratic socialist: Harry Britt. Britt, a 48-year-old former Methodist minister, is also a vice-chair of Democratic Socialists of America and a prominent local leader in battles for gay rights, rent control and control over the runaway downtown high-rise office expansion.

Despite the candidates' unanimous opposition to contra aid or Star Wars, the campaign divisions are intense, the

feminist, both of whom have become more sympathetic to developers in recent years. If no candidate gets more than half of all votes in the April 7 open primary, there will be a run-off among top vote-getters from each party.

They are fighting for the seat long held by Phillip Burton, a nationally influential pro-labor liberal who fought to expand social welfare and also fashioned an effective local political "machine." His wife, Sala, won his seat on his death in 1983.

Despite the Burtons' well-run alliance of diverse interests on behalf of national liberal goals, San Francisco politics has fractured in recent years. The new schisms largely reflect the city's tremendous growth as a financial capital for the "Pacific rim" economy. Downtown office growth has not only changed the appearance of the city but it has also caused housing costs to skyrocket in a city where three-fourths of residents in the Fifth Congressional District are renters. The astronomical rents have driven many low- and moderate-income people out while straining public services, taxes and space to accommodate an increasingly suburban workforce.

Developer money has also transformed city politics, especially with the shift from district to citywide supervisor elections and the dominance of pro-developer Mayor Dianne Feinstein. On top of this, a newly conscious gay community—liberal in self-interest, often more conservative on economic issues—has emerged as a force in politics.

Liberal contradictions: Endorsed by Sala Burton on her deathbed, Nancy Pelosi, 45, embodies the contradictions of the waning Burton machine—liberal on major national issues but part of the business-political establishment locally. The daughter of a prominent Baltimore Democratic political family and wife of a rich realtor, Pelosi has been a fund-raiser, a chair of the state party, a narrowly defeated challenger to national chairman Paul Kirk in 1984 and last year finance chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. Her years of raising money, including \$13 million that helped the Democrats retake the Senate last year, are her major—critics say her only—credentials. She has either been silent on or opposed major community efforts to extend rent controls to cover increases when apartments become vacant, the Proposition M limiting downtown growth that passed last fall and district elections of supervisors. The one consuming crusade of Sala Burton had been opposition to homeporting the nuclear-equipped battleship *Missouri* at San Francisco; Pelosi accepts homeporting as a *fait accompli* (Britt is the only candidate vigorously opposing the *Missouri*).

Never before elected to office, Pelosi does not have a record—an advantage in that she's a fresh face, a potential disadvantage if opponents convince voters she's untested. On major economic, social, foreign policy, labor and environmental issues, she espouses a solid liberal position (despite occasional lapses such as recent praise for President Napoleon Duarte's regime in El Salvador). But her major claim is that she's "a voice that will be heard" since she already knows most prominent Democrats, and they owe her something for her fundraising. "She's got knowhow and relations with people back in Congress to immediately get benefits for this community," said campaign chair John Burton, Phil's brother who served in Congress and now represents major developers. "The way to get things done is to know the people who can get things done. Nancy has that edge. Nobody is going to have to introduce her to the speaker."

Britt tells San Franciscans that they need more than a good vote; they need a passionate, articulate voice on behalf of not only gays but also labor, the urban dispossessed and other victims of corporate power. He sees himself as an organizer through his office as much as a legislator. In addition, he says, "I will work where the dialogue is most progressive and try to push it to the left." That, he argues, is what a member of Congress from this seat can and should do. Pelosi's fund-raising may mean other politicians owe her something, but, Britt argues, it also means she owes something to those donors.

"Part of what I'm involved in is making visible the invisible, alienated people," including the "ghettoized left," he says. As a representative, he would be a critic of "the way power is organized around profit in this society," he says. "We do have to fight to maintain more humane

parts of the liberal agenda, but I'm more interested in changing power relationships than enacting liberal programs."

Contrast in styles: Pelosi can claim to be the effective inside arm-twister (which has helped her win some labor and left support), but Britt is the organizer-agitator with a clearly defined local record who could take that style to the national arena. "She may be able to arm-twist," said gay leader Rick Pacurar, "but I'm not sure she knows what to arm-twist for."

Maher, a self-styled compromiser with environmentalist appeal, and Pelosi will battle for the more conservative votes, but Britt has already picked off parts of the traditional Burton machine, including a small political club in a white, working-class district. Britt can also count on a fairly unified gay community, estimated at 20 percent of the likely voters. (Two gay Democratic clubs that have often opposed Britt have endorsed him.) As a leader in tenant and community battles, Britt can count on the sizable self-conscious left and many renters beyond the gay community.

But Britt disillusioned many of his closest supporters when he recently announced support for Supervisor John Molinari—a onetime Nixon Republican turned moderately liberal Democrat—in the race to replace Dianne Feinstein as mayor this fall. Most of his left allies are lining up behind state Sen. Art Agnos, a longtime Pelosi friend and associate.

"My support of Molinari is a very complicated strategic move," Britt says. "It's the best way for me to use my political leverage." Britt had long urged Agnos to run, but Molinari was building a base earlier and faster than Agnos.

Although he felt closer ideologically to Agnos, Britt decided late last year to endorse Molinari. Friends insist he wanted to have some insider influence on what he saw as the likely new administration, rather than be on the outside as he has been under Feinstein. Even some Agnos backers acknowledge that the Agnos candidacy looks difficult, but they wish Britt had simply stayed neutral. Although Britt insists the decision preceded his decision to run for Congress, Molinari's support may bring Britt money and some moderate voters.

Since the turnout is expected to be small and divided among many candidates, Britt's strong gay and left base may give him the edge—especially with the campaign's grassroots effort to mobilize voters, half of whom are expected to vote absentee. Only Pelosi, who some think may raise double Britt's \$400,000, may buy TV time. If Britt is to win, Maher must do well against Pelosi.

Britt Campaign Manager Dick Pabich acknowledges Britt may lose a small fraction of gay votes because of his left and pro-tenant policies, but most important the campaign must overcome the politically demoralizing effects of the AIDS crisis. At the same time, Pabich worries about liberal perceptions: "If they feel he only cares about gay people or have fears of their one representative in Congress being gay, and we lose those good-hearted liberal people, we lose."

INSIDE STORY

alliances at times surprising and the ultimate issues differentiating the candidates often very local.

The two other Democrats most observers consider potential winners are Nancy Pelosi, a longtime party functionary and fund-raiser backed by much of the local—and national—liberal Democratic political establishment, and Bill Maher, a youthful supervisor with strong appeal among moderate white voters. Two other Democratic supervisors will influence the race by how well they do: Doris Ward, a black woman, and Carol Ruth Silver, a white

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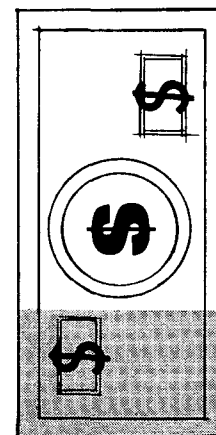
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Help, Part II

Our \$125,000 fund drive is still only crawling. In the two weeks since our last report, we have received only \$3,227 from the 109 new contributors. In addition, two subscribers have agreed to be sustainers, in the amount of \$140 for the year, and \$450 more has been pledged in contributions to be made later this year. That brings our overall totals to \$31,128 from 845 subscribers, and 31 new sustainers and pledges totalling \$3,628. With a grand total of \$34,756 we are still only one-third of the way to our necessary goal. So if you have not yet sent in a check and can afford to do so, please do it now.

Goal \$125,000

\$34,756



By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

AN ISRAELI JOURNALIST, WHEN ASKED LAST week about the effect of the Tower Commission's report on American-Israeli relations, remarked, "If the relationship survived the Pollard case, it can survive anything."

But in the long run, the revelations in the commission's report may prove even more damaging than those in the case of Jonathan Pollard, the American convicted last week of spying for Israel. If the case revealed the underside of Israel's relationship to the U.S., the Tower report revealed its downside.

The recent reports of both the Senate Intelligence Committee and the Tower Commission suggest that without Israeli encouragement the Reagan administration might never have undertaken the arms-for-hostage policy in the first place nor have persevered with it after initial reverses. Moreover, the Tower Commission report suggests that the Israelis were trying to satisfy their own interests at the expense of American interests. According to the report, "elements in Israel undoubtedly wanted the U.S. involved [in arms sales] for its own sake so as to distance the U.S. from the Arab world and ultimately to establish Israel as the only real strategic partner of the U.S. in the region."

The report criticizes the Reagan administration's policy precisely because it had this effect. The American attempt to trade arms for hostages "increased the risk that the U.S. would be perceived, especially in the Arab world, as a creature of Israel." Both Secretary of State George Shultz and Vice President George Bush shared these misgivings. Bush "expressed concern" to the commission about the extent to which the interests of the U.S. "were in the grip of the Israelis."

Israeli assistance: Even after the revelations of the Tower and Senate Intelligence reports, a dense fog continues to surround the origins of the arms-for-hostage plan, but Israel's role is still visible. In mid-July 1985 a meeting took place in Israel. In attendance were American Michael Ledeen, a right-wing adventurer of dubious repute whom National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane had hired in November 1984 as a consultant in counter-terrorism; Israeli government official David Kimche; two Israeli arms dealers, Al Schwimmer and Yaacov Nimrodi, who were both close friends of then-Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres; and Iranian arms dealer Manuchehr Ghorbanifar, a former official of the Shah of Iran's secret police SAVAK. At that meeting, the Israelis and Ghorbanifar broached the hostage plan.

Ledeen had met with Peres two months earlier to gain Israel's cooperation in freeing hostage and CIA officer William Buckley and to solicit Israel's help in understanding political developments in Iran. Peres had set up a group to provide Americans with intelligence. Israeli officials had set up the July meeting between Ledeen and Ghorbanifar, who would play a critical role in the arms deals.

Ghorbanifar had approached the Israelis earlier with a proposal to sell arms and to influence Iranian politics. The Israelis took him in hand and became his link to the Americans just as he became their link to the government in Tehran. While American officials initially perceived him as an independent operator, they came to believe that he responded "generally to [Israeli] direction,"

The Israeli role in arms sales shines through the fog surrounding Irangate

the Tower report reveals.

At the mid-July meeting, Ghorbanifar and the Israelis proposed that the U.S. sanction an Israeli sale of U.S.-made TOW missiles to Iran in exchange for which Iran would see that American hostages in Lebanon were freed. Israeli official David Kimche subsequently took the proposal to McFarlane in Washington, who sought and won President Reagan's approval for the deal.

Ghorbanifar and the Israelis also helped provide the geopolitical rationale for the hostage deal. He insisted that there was a large group of moderates in Tehran who sought to renew ties with the U.S. and to limit the rule of clerics in Iran. When Kimche



visited McFarlane, he reported that Iran was "in a shambles" and that a takeover by a pro-American faction was very possible. Taking these words to heart, White House and CIA officials came to understand selling arms as a means of solidifying the position of a moderate pro-American faction in a regime that was on the verge of collapse.

Once it was undertaken, the Israelis sustained the arms strategy when the White House began to falter. In January 1986, after the Iranians had angrily returned an Israeli shipment they claimed to be defective, Amiram Nir, an aide to Peres, who became Israel's chief link to the arms deals, "advanced a proposal just when the initiative seemed to be dying." Nir proposed that the U.S. itself begin selling weapons to Iran. Later that month, Nir's proposal became White House policy.

Then last July, when the White House was considering abandoning the arms-for-hostages deal, Nir informed National Security Council (NSC) aide Lt. Col. Oliver North that another hostage would be released. Three weeks later, on July 26, hostage Father Lawrence Jenco was freed.

There are gaping holes in the Tower Commission's chronology, but they do not detract from the general impression of Israeli influence. The commission did not investigate reports that then-Secretary of State Alexander Haig approved Israeli arms shipments to Iran in 1981; nor did it examine why Israel, which had been shipping arms to Iran since then, decided to ask for American approval in July 1985, but not during the prior four years.

Israel may have worried that Secretary of State George Shultz would try to enforce his anti-terrorism policy and wanted, in his words, to "get itself into a position where its arms sales to Iran could not be criticized by us." The Israelis did this by tying the arms sales to a hostage deal. They may have also seen in 1985 an opportunity, which did not exist earlier, to draw the U.S. into its broader strategy of strengthening Iran against Iraq

and the Arab states, and it used the arms deal as a pretext.

No policy: But Israeli influence was never sufficient to convince the Reagan administration to follow a policy that not only contradicted its public stance, but that also bore risk of incurring scandal and disgrace.

Self-interested inside agitators may have played a role within the administration. Ledeen made the first contact between the administration and the Israelis and Ghorbanifar. He defended Ghorbanifar against charges—subsequently confirmed both by events and a CIA polygraph—that he had consistently lied to the U.S. about Iran. Ledeen once described Ghorbanifar to an incredulous CIA investigator as a "wonderful man almost too good to be true."

The commission accepted Ledeen's denial that he had a private stake in the arms deal through Ghorbanifar and Schwimmer. But the charge, made by Israelis, was lent credence by an Oliver North memo on the TOW missile deal, which read, "Gorba got 13,200/missile Gets \$260/missile Gives \$50/missile to Ledeen."

More straightforward factors contributed to the acceptance of the Israeli strategy. Since early 1984 some NSC and CIA officials had been clamoring for a policy aimed at restoring the old U.S.-Iran alliance. In a June 1985 position paper, NSC official Howard Teicher and CIA official Graham Fuller called for using diplomatic initiatives, including arms sales, "to block Soviet advances in the short term while building our leverage in Iran and trying to restore the U.S. position which existed under the shah over the longer term."

The NSC and CIA aides claimed that the Ayatollah Khomeini's regime was on the verge of collapse and that in the succession battle the U.S. had to champion a moderate faction against the increasingly formidable Soviet faction. According to the report, Shultz charged that Teicher and Fuller exaggerated "the current anti-regime sentiment." CIA Deputy Director John McMahon "pointed out that we had no knowledge of any moderates in Iran, that most of the moderates had been slaughtered when Khomeini took over." But Teicher and Fuller, with the backing of CIA Director William Casey, stuck to their guns, and their arguments reinforced the "intelligence" provided by the Israelis and Ghorbanifar.

President Reagan's desperate desire to get back the hostages equally played into the Israeli strategy. The decision to sanction the first Israeli arms sale in August 1985 was

The administration's CIA and NSC strategists were intent on recreating the three-way alliance with Iran.

made in the wake of the TWA hijacking in June. In December, as administration interest in a deal flagged, Reagan was afraid, CIA Director Casey wrote, that "terminating the ongoing discussions...could lead to early action against the hostages." In March, one CIA analyst wrote, North kept the arms initiative alive because "of the president's personal and emotional interest in getting the hostages out."

And then there was North himself, who emerges in the Tower Commission report not as a sophisticated schemer, but as a hopeless *naif* dangerously over his head. In August 1985 North took over what had already devolved into an arms-for-hostages initiative. North trumpeted Ghorbanifar and the Israelis' predictions of looming Iranian collapse and fell repeatedly for Ghorbanifar's inflated promises of imminent success. After a February meeting with Ghorbanifar, North wrote Adm. John Poindexter, "While all this could be so much smoke, I believe that we may well be on the verge of a major breakthrough—not only on the hostages/terrorism, but on the relationship as a whole."

Then in September of that year, North wrote Poindexter: "Sincerely believe that RR [Ronald Reagan] can be instrumental in bringing about an end to Iran/Iraq war—a la Roosevelt w/ Russo/Japanese War in 1904. Anybody for RR getting the same prize." (Theodore Roosevelt got the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906.)

But perhaps the most pressing reason why the administration accepted the Israeli strategy was that it lacked from the beginning a coherent policy in the Mideast. Secretaries of State Haig and Shultz had backed Israel's invasion of Lebanon. While timidly proposing Israeli reconciliation with the Palestinians in Jordan, Shultz and Reagan allowed the American peace-keeping force in Beirut to become a pawn in Israel's war with Syria. The administration responded to Shi'ite fundamentalism in Lebanon and Iran with bluster. It attacked Libya for its support of terrorism while seeming to ignore Syria and Iran.

The administration's high strategists in the CIA and NSC were intent on recreating the triangular alliance with Iran and Israel that had sustained American policy in the '70s. At the time, this strategy was meant to counteract Arab and Palestinian nationalism, but it is hardly relevant to an era when Iran's own pan-Islamic fundamentalism threatens American allies in the Persian Gulf.

Israel's wily strategists stepped into a void. Ledeen himself put it best when he characterized Shultz's reaction to the first Israeli arms sale this way: "It didn't seem to have anything to do with policy. There was no policy anyway."

But the strategists may also have stepped on a land mine. Even before the arms deal had been exposed last November, the White House had begun to cut both the Israelis and Ghorbanifar out of the action. And once the scandal broke, the administration was quick to scapegoat Israel, even implying that Reagan had not sanctioned the first arms shipment in August 1985.

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By Joel Bleifuss

CIA buys stranded Polish arms

The *Wall Street Journal* on February 20 reported that last October rifles and Polish land mines (see *In These Times*, Jan. 28). The weapons were on their way to the contras via Guatemala when Eugene Hasenfus' plane was shot down over Nicaragua. Oliver North's private arms network was consequently exposed. North flew to El Salvador and cancelled the shipment. So, the weapons-filled boat changed course and docked in Wilmington, Del. The *Journal*, always in touch with the business angle, says that Col. North persuaded then-CIA Director William Casey to buy the weapons and thus allow the original merchants in North's supply network to "cover costs," i.e. make a profit. Apparently the Polish booty was stored in a warehouse where the CIA stocks other Soviet-bloc weapons for use in covert operations. However, it is not known if the CIA kept the weapons or sent them on to U.S.-sponsored wars in the Third World.

Contras, drugs and the North network

The *Guardian of London* saw it to print the National Security Council contra-cocaine connection a couple of weeks ago, after sending Michael White to Miami. And on February 24 the *New York Times* reported the scandal. (See *In These Times*, Dec. 10, 1986, and Feb. 4.) The *New York Times* story was placed in the "Washington Talk" section, page 10. Along with *In These Times*, *The Nation*, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, *Sojourners*, *The Progressive* and the *Village Voice* had all covered the story previously. The *New York Times* article by Keith Schneider tells of Sen. John Kerry's nine-month Senate investigation, and then reports the interesting news that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has hired Jack Blum as a special counsel to investigate the affair. Blum worked on the 1972 congressional investigation that showed International Telephone and Telegraph had tried to tinker with the Chilean presidential election of Salvador Allende and that Lockheed Corp. was boosting sales by bribing foreign officials. Schneider reports that Blum "believes the [cocaine connection] story might spread from Central America into other federal agencies and to other continents." Blum said, "We've learned enough so far to take a very careful look."

Cocaine connection update

The May 1986 lawsuit filed by the Christic Institute, a Washington, D.C., Jesuit organization, and U.S. journalists Tony Avirgan and Martha Honey against 29 men, accusing them of gun-running, drug-trafficking and racketeering has passed its first court test, according to the *Guardian of London* and the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*. The 29 defendants are accused, among other things, of attempting to assassinate moderate contra leader Eden Pastora on May 30, 1984—thereby causing serious injury to Tony Avirgan, an ABC cameraman—and plotting to kill the U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica, Lewis Tambs, blame it on the Sandinistas and then collect the \$1,000,000 in blood money from Pablo Escobar, a Colombian cocaine dealer (see *In These Times* Dec. 11, 24, 1986, and Feb. 4). The *Guardian* described the defendants as a "selective cast" of Irangate. On January 30 U.S. District Judge James L. King ruled in Miami that the Christic Institute's suit had demonstrated possible violations of the 1970 Federal Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organization statute. According to Michael Emery, writing in the *Bay Guardian*, with this ruling the plaintiffs, Honey and Avirgan, "must now demonstrate that the alleged racketeering followed a historical pattern. They are therefore entitled by law to trace related events in past years." The Christic suit plans to demonstrate that the defendants and their crimes span four continents, including countries in the opium- and cocaine-producing regions of Indochina and South America. In their suit, the Jesuits, Avirgan and Honey describe the 29 defendants this way: "These defendants, some of whom have been tagged by the press as 'contrapreneurs,' represent the very epitome of organized crime, but on an international stage. They deal wholesale in narcotic drugs, illegal weapons and violence. Rather than take over local businesses or undermine local government, they seek to take over whole nations. They do not hesitate to murder and destroy anyone or anything that gets in their way. By any definition these defendants, alleged merchants of heroin and terrorism, are organized criminals on a scale larger than life."



Above, students at Auburn University on February 23 in support of the Nicaraguan people and against U.S. intervention. The officer did not arrest the students, although they were breaking campus law by using the university's free-speech area after it had closed. Left, two counter demonstrators proclaim their opinion.



Jeanne Malone, Opelle-Auburn News

Fasting for Nicaragua

For three nights two weeks ago 15 Auburn University students broke university law and stayed in the school's free speech area after it had closed. The students at the Alabama college had set up tents and were fasting in support of the Nicaraguan people and against the U.S. proxy war being waged against them.

Auburn is one of 42 campuses in 17 states and the District of Columbia where an estimated 1,500 students went without food on February 23 to raise money for Nicaraguan relief. The fund-raising action—which followed the better tradition of fraternity and sorority charitable events like "dancing for muscular dystrophy"—was coordinated by the National Student Ac-

tion Center of Washington, D.C., a networking organization for the student left.

This was Student Action's second annual fast. Last year 11 campuses participated. The money the students raised is distributed as each campus group sees fit, though Student Action did provide a list of nine worthy organizations, including Oxfam of Oxford, England, and the Quixote Center of suburban Maryland. That Auburn participated is an example of the breadth of the left revival on college campuses.

"Auburn is not known for having liberal students," Leigh Burkey, an Auburn senior from Knoxville, Tenn., told *In These Times*. "This is a very right-wing campus. Next to Texas A&M, Auburn has the largest ROTC program in the country." It also gets a good chunk of Star Wars research money.

More than 40 students and fac-

ulty at the university took part in the Monday fast. And 15 of those decided they would camp out in the Open Air Forum, the school's free-speech area, and continue their fast through Thursday.

Leigh, who was one of the event's coordinators, said the fast "was real inspiring, even though this is the monsoon season and it was real wet and real cold."

Northeastern Alabama sat up and took note. Leigh says, "It was all over the news. Nothing like this had ever happened at Auburn. The nights we camped out we got a lot of support. People came out who wanted to know what was going on. They talked to us and listened, instead of blindly going by what Ronnie says."

Adding to the scene were counter-protesting ROTC students. "Democracy not Marxism" and "Peace not Pacifism" read double-think messages on their placards. Leigh says that as soon as it got cold and wet the military youth left.

The university police came out at night. In addition to giving a local TV station van a parking ticket the officers checked and made note of everybody's i.d. card. Leigh explains, "The free speech area is only open from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. But the administration extended the hours from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to accommodate. Normally we have free speech here only a couple hours a day."

The students were ready with bail, but there were no arrests. According to Leigh, however, charges of "third degree trespassing or something" are still threatened and the ACLU is on standby.

—Joel Bleifuss

"Jim Bob's" radioactive gypsum: the toxic tale continues

People all over Louisiana are awaiting the next installment of what has become a highly rated soap opera in a state that has both a gambling governor and the second-highest unemployment rate in the nation. Providing the tears and laughter each week is the toxic dumping drama "All My Gypsum," starring fertilizer magnate and corporate good-guy James R. "Jim Bob" Moffett, head of Freeport-McMoRan (see *In These Times*, Dec. 24, 1986).

What will happen next?

Will Jim Bob win state permits to dump two million tons of radioactive gypsum in the Mississippi River each year? Or will an ignorant citizen make good on one of the 160 death threats Jim Bob has received—dusting him off before the gypsum settles to the bottom of the glass?

Will Gov. Edwin W. Edwards—who recently fired the head of his environmental protection agency

for not "balancing the interests of industry with the environment"—be persuaded by his brother Marion to issue dumping permits? Marion was hired by Jim Bob to lobby for Freeport-McMoRan. And if the gypsum gets dumped, will future mothers down-river from the fertilizer plant give birth to Jim Bob look-alikes?

Stay tuned.

Besides Moffett's Freeport-McMoRan, three other Louisiana fertilizer companies want federal permits to dump gypsum, a fertilizer by-product that contains traces of radon, uranium, cadmium, arsenic and selenium. These companies, which employ about 1,500 workers, have maintained that it's too expensive to pile the gypsum on land. They have said that without the permits they will go out of business. One company, Beker, did so in January and Moffett has offered to buy its plant. Moffett has also made an offer for third area fertilizer plant, Agrico.

But Moffett says his fertilizer conglomeration depends on receiving the gypsum-dumping permits. So, when the federal Environmental Protection Agency decided to reduce the amount of gypsum it would allow to be dumped in the

river, and when the state said it would not issue any permits to dump gypsum, Moffett lost it. At a February 10 press conference he threatened to take his gypsum someplace where it would be more appreciated. The former New Yorker called those Louisianans opposing gypsum dumping "ignorant." He said he had hired body guards to protect himself from 160 death threats. He also described Louisiana as "a banana republic," saying his company has received better treatment in foreign countries.

In the days following, many ignoramuses wrote their newspapers to give Moffett a history lesson. They pointed out that a banana republic—a Latin American country run primarily by and for the benefit of U.S. corporate interests like the banana industry—is exactly what Moffett wants Louisiana to be. As editorial pages played Jim Bob's funeral dirge, Moffett said he was misquoted. No, he didn't mean to call the people of Louisiana ignorant. He has too much respect for them.

But can Louisianans still respect Jim Bob? Tune in again for another dose of "All My Gypsum."

—Zack Nauth



Jeffrey "Uncle Sam" Colledge of Altoona, Pa., has got Duncan "Honduras" Murphy of Fayetteville, Ark., by the neck during a February 25 protest at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Taking civil disobedience on the road

On Wednesday, February 25, eight U.S. citizens, including two Maryknoll priests, blockaded the main entrance to the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

In a liturgical protest the group threw blood on the embassy wall. And onto the embassy door they nailed, well, taped, an indictment of the Reagan administration "for crimes against peace, crimes against humanity and war crimes."

The protesters said their actions were based on Christian faith.

The group caused a stir in Honduras. The story was all over local newspapers despite an attempt by the embassy's Marine guards to prevent reporters from taking pictures. Photographing the embassy, located on Tegucigalpa's Peace Avenue, is illegal, according to the Marines.

Said protester Duncan Murphy, "Just as the Honduran people despise the fawning servitude of forces in their government that would betray its people, we U.S. citizens protesting at the U.S. Em-

bassy in Tegucigalpa despise the president and Congress of the U.S. who have betrayed the principles of liberty and justice set forth in our Constitution 200 years ago."

The protesters shut down normal operations at the embassy for February 25, but on the next day the eight were forcibly removed by armed Honduran soldiers, taken to the airport and deported. They shared the flight home with contra strongman Adolfo Calero and Pedro Jaquin Chamorro, former co-director of the Nicaraguan newspaper *La Prensa* and current contra figurehead.

Targeting Khadafy: a broadshot by jingo

Award-winning investigative journalist Seymour Hersh has written an article in the February 22 *New York Times Magazine* that provides some details of the Reagan administration's April 1986 plans to assassinate Muammar Khadafy with a fleet of F-111 bombers. Apparently John Poindexter and Oliver North played key roles and then-CIA Director William Casey provided the doctored evidence—remember those ghostly "hit squads" in the U.S. and the assertion that Libya was responsible for bombing of the West German discotheque. Khadafy was not killed, although his 15-month-old daughter was. Hersh reports that Air Force officials widely view Khadafy's survival as a "fluke." They are probably just covering their tails. A Pentagon source told *In These Times* that it wasn't surprising that Khadafy survived and that the whole mission was "incredibly stupid." Apparently, the Pentagon's original feasibility study for the Libyan bombing had concluded that chances of killing Khadafy were slight, the death of civilians certain, and consequently the U.S. had little to gain. This conclusion was endorsed up the chain of military command until at one unknown point it was overruled by wider political considerations.

Some good news from Vermont

Burlington, Vt., remains the only city in the U.S. where a picture of Eugene V. Debs decorates the mayor's office. Socialist Mayor Bernie Sanders was returned to office on March 3 for a fourth term with the largest plurality of his career. He won 6,901 votes while his Democratic opponent, Paul Lafayette, got 5,299. Running as an independent but affiliated with the leftist Progressive Coalition, Sanders shocked local political experts with the strength of his win. This was the first time Sanders has run against just one opponent. He was originally elected mayor of Vermont's largest city in a 1981 race involving five candidates. He won that election by 10 votes. In the 1983 and 1985 elections, both the Democrats and the Republicans ran candidates against him. But this year the anti-Sanders' forces united around the Democratic candidate in a low-key race that focused on personality. The election put a sixth Sanders' supporter on the board of aldermen. Another Progressive Coalition aldermanic candidate will have a runoff against a Democrat. If that Sanders ally wins, the socialist mayor will have a working majority of seven out of 13 in city hall and the Democratic Party, which controlled the city until Sanders became mayor, will be out in the cold.

U.S. clarifies South Korea policies

Gen. Chun Doo-Hwan and his Democratic Justice Party maintain their grip on South Korea through gerrymandering electoral districts to favor the rural vote, having local officials in those rural areas who are able to rig the election, an indirect electoral college system of choosing the president and a constitutional rule that grants the winning party—which is always Gen. Chun's party—additional seats in the National Assembly. According to Fred Branfman in *World Policy Journal*, these are the reasons why Korea's main opposition party, the New Korean Democratic Party (NKDP) has as the key plank in its platform direct election of the president. And the U.S. position? Well, last May, Secretary of State George Shultz visited Korea and said the Philippines under Ferdinand Marcos and South Korea under Chun "are about as dissimilar as any two situations you could imagine." Chun was, said Shultz, "moving impressively in the right direction." In 1986 NKDP leader Kim Dae-Jung was put under house arrest 39 times. According to the North American Committee for Human Rights in Korea, on Dec. 18, 1986, U.S. Ambassador James Lilly met with NKDP members and told them that he will support the restoration of civil rights for Kim Dae-Jung if Kim and his party renounce their campaign for a directly elected president.

More money to the contras

On February 28 the *New York Times* reported the story about how the Guatemalan military has been aiding the contras (see *In These Times*, Feb. 4). The *Times* article goes on to note that the U.S. has probably been channeling money to the contras via Guatemala since early 1985 when Robert McFarlane met with Guatemalan strongman Gen. Mejia Victores. The *Times* reports, "President Reagan's budget submission, made shortly after Mr. McFarlane's return from Central America, recommended an increase in aid to Guatemala from \$300,000 to \$35.3 million, \$10 million of it in the form of credits for American military equipment and \$25 million for economic assistance."

By Richard Ryan

THE ATTENTION PAID TO THE RELEASE OF THE report of the President's Special Review Board, better known as the Tower Commission, has overshadowed the release of a more ambitious report whose implications are much more far-reaching. While media attention centers on the Tower report, a private institute known as the National Security Archive has released its own chronology of Iran/contra events. Its report not only indicates that the scandal may have begun much earlier than the Tower report acknowledges, but it also demonstrates that, rather than being narrowly confined to the National Security Council (NSC), several branches of President Reagan's administration appear to be involved—including the CIA, the Pentagon and the State Department.

The report from the non-profit Washington, D.C.-based institute is entitled "Secret Military Assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan Opposition: A Chronology of Events



and Individuals." The Archive has reviewed news accounts and compiled public records dating back to 1980, summarizing them in a chronology that provides a never-before-seen picture of the evolution of the Iran/contra scandal (see story below).

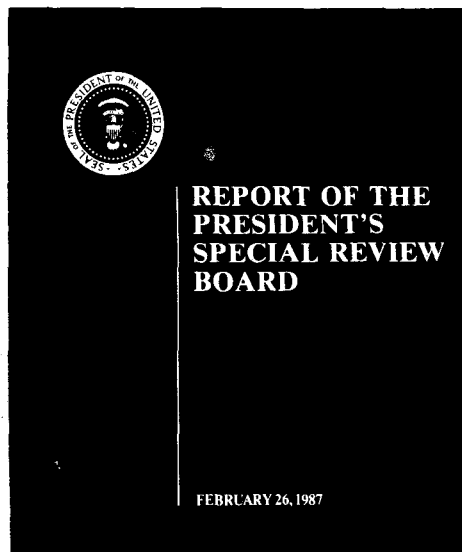
The Tower report adheres to the chronology established by the report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. The Senate report, a draft report of which was released in January at the White House's urging, chose the August 1985 transfer of TOW missiles from Israel to Iran as the beginning

An independent report sheds more light than the Tower Commission's

of U.S. involvement in the arms deals. The report excludes the possibility that earlier shipments—from both U.S. and Israeli sources—may have been made with administration approval. Since the committee was under Republican control when most evidence was gathered and when the draft report was formulated, this chronology—and the Tower report's faithful following of it—can be seen as a form of damage control for a Republican president. According to news accounts, the committee's chairman, Sen. David Durenberger (R-MN), briefed Vice President George Bush on the report's contents before it was released.

The Tower Commission was headed by former Sen. John Tower, a hawkish conservative from Texas, who since leaving the Senate has been one of the administration's chief negotiators at the Strategic Arms Talks in Geneva. Almost immediately following the report's completion, the White House offered Tower a chance to head the CIA, a post the senator declined. (Tower's fellow commission-member, Brent Scowcroft, was also reportedly offered the job; Scowcroft has been a military consultant to Reagan throughout his presidency.) It is some measure of the administration's faith in these commissioners that Reagan would feel comfortable having either of them oversee an agency that appears to have been so deeply involved in the Iran/contra scandal.

By contrast, the Archive's chronology traces President Reagan's covert dealings with Iran back to the administration's earliest days. The report cites a *Washington Post*



story from last November, alleging that in 1981 Secretary of State Alexander Haig approved an Israeli shipment of military parts to Iran. It also refers to a 1983 *Time* magazine

Retired Air Force Gen. Richard Secord

story regarding large-scale shipments of U.S.-made TOW missiles from Israel to Iran. *In These Times* has confirmed through U.S. and Israeli intelligence sources that these and other sales had official U.S. permission (see story at right).

In the Archive's chronology one individual's name appears time and again: Air Force Gen. Richard Secord. This is hardly surprising, given Secord's background. He was a member of the Special Operations Group, an organization of covert warfare specialists who were widely reported to have led the secret military operation against Laos during the Vietnam War. Then in the mid-'70s he was the Air Force's military attache in Iran. Eventually, he became deputy secretary of defense for the Near East in the Reagan administration. The Archive has compiled a copious stack of Defense Department travel vouchers documenting Secord's extensive travel in the early '80s, when he still worked at the Pentagon.

In 1981 Secord spearheaded the administration's successful lobbying effort to win congressional approval for the sale of advanced military aircraft AWACS to the Saudi Arabian government. The Archive cites several news accounts describing Saudi "kickbacks" to the contras in return for Secord's efforts. The general retired in May 1983,

Archive tracks national security information

The National Security Archive was founded about a year ago in order to make available to investigative reporters and other interested parties declassified and unclassified documents relating to national security matters. (One of the Archive's long-term goals is to establish computerized databases cross-referencing about 10,000 documents each. The databases would then serve as indexes leading researchers to the original source material.)

The idea for the Archive condensed around *Washington Post* reporter Scott Armstrong's recognition that the public needed a group that would keep track of the massive amounts of national security information that were coming into the public domain. Armstrong eventually left the *Post* to raise money and engineer the creation of the National Security Archive early last year.

When the news broke in November 1986 of how the White House diverted profits from the arms-for-hostages deal to aid the contras, Armstrong began preparing a chronology for Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HA). But when Armstrong realized how much energy the prospec-

tive study would take, he brought in Archive staffer Malcolm Byrne, who went on to become editor of the expanding chronology.

"Once we realized [the Iran-contra] scandal would be mushrooming into a real incident, we thought the chronology would become a full-scale project for us," Byrne told *In These Times*. "We believed it would be valuable to have these events placed in perspective, so that you can see how they unfold."

In addition to news accounts, the Archive's chronology encompasses numerous court documents and such materials as Salvadoran telephone records. And the Archive drew on documents already in their burgeoning files, such as Alexander Haig's logs, which Armstrong obtained by legal suit while still at the *Post*. The chronology also cites several overseas press accounts, which the Archive was led to by the CIA's own in-house presswatching apparatus, the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). The FBIS is one of the few easily available CIA publications, and Byrne describes it as a "wholly underutilized resource." R.R.



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about a year after investigators linked him to Edwin Wilson, an arms dealer accused of overcharging the Pentagon on weapons sold to Egypt. According to journalist Peter Maas, a Pentagon review of Secord's activities was stifled by then-Deputy Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci. Carlucci is currently Reagan's national security adviser.

After he retired in 1983, Secord became one of the leading private operatives in Lt. Col. Oliver North's efforts to fund the Nicaraguan opposition. Throughout the 225 pages

The National Security Archive's chronology of the Iran/contra scandal traces the Reagan administration's covert dealings with Iran back to their earliest days. In the chronology, one individual's name appears time and time again. The name: Air Force Gen. Richard Secord.

of the Archive's chronology, numerous entries track Secord's involvement in the contra supply network, culminating in Secord's management of a private Swiss bank account through which arms sales profits were diverted to contra coffers.

Establishing Secord's central role in the Iran/contra scandal is only one function of the Archive document. The chronology poses several unresolved questions about Reagan's foreign policy. Among them are the following:

The private arms network: As reported in the February 11 issue of *In These Times*, in addition to negotiating an official arms deal with the Iranians through the Israelis,

the administration gave tacit or explicit sanction to several private weapons sales to Iran. These included:

1. Ramco: According to a lengthy July 1982 *Time* article, Ramco, a major aviation parts company in New Jersey, openly sold spare parts to the Iranian Air Force in 1982. The same article describes the R.R.C. Company, supposedly a Persian rug shop in Stamford, Conn. The company was actually a front run by the Hashemi brothers, Cyrus and Jamshed ("Balanian"), two Iranian nationals on an arms-buying mission for their government throughout the early '80s.

2. The Hashemi-Evans-Northrop deal: Cyrus Hashemi acting as an informant for U.S. Customs, tape recorded meetings with several international arms dealers. As described in federal court records cited by the Archive, Hashemi was subsequently introduced to a number of Israeli arms merchants by Sam Evans, the chief counsel for Adnan Khashoggi. Eventually Hashemi was able to get the Israelis to agree to sell approximately \$1 billion worth of arms to Iran. Hashemi then lured the Israelis to Bermuda, where they were arrested by U.S. Customs agents.

In *These Times* recently learned that one of the Israelis, an American immigrant named William Northrop, is an agent for Mossad, Israel's secret service, and that the Justice Department ordered Northrop's arrest in response to Israeli interference with U.S. negotiations with Iran. Mossad retaliated for the arrest of Northrop and his fellow Israelis by leaking the story of the U.S. arms deal in late October of last year. It may have also been responsible for the mysterious death of Cyrus Hashemi in London last July (see *In These Times*, Feb. 11 and 18).

3. Demavand: This is the code name for a project involving numerous private arms dealers and U.S. arms contractors, whose existence was widely known in the Pentagon, according to documents obtained by the *New York Times* and published early this year. The Demavand Project, named for Iran's highest mountain, contracted to sell more than \$1 billion in weapons to Iran. At

least some of these arms are believed to have been delivered to Tehran.

4. The two colonels: Two U.S. Army colonels—Col. Ralph Broman in Paris and Col. William Mott in London—were implicated in a January 1987 *New York Times* story that alleges the officers brokered U.S. arms to Iran as far back as 1983. According to the *New York Times* report, the National Security Council, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the CIA knew about the colonels' activities.

5. Arif Durrani: An Iranian national charged with attempting to sell Hawk missile parts

to Iran, Durrani claims to have had extensive contact with retired Pentagon official Richard Secord and NSC staffer Lt. Col. Oliver North, according to Durrani's affidavit filed in Connecticut District Court and obtained by the Archive.

Like Durrani, all the above-mentioned arms merchants claim to have acted with official U.S. government assurance that their transactions reflected the approved (though secret) U.S. policy of selling arms to Iran. Despite widespread knowledge of these private

Continued on page 10

U.S. knew about 1982 Iran arms shipment

Among the many long-forgotten reports revived by the National Security Archive's chronology of Irangate is a fascinating story that first appeared in *Time* magazine in July of 1983. In an article by Ed Magnuson and several staff reporters, *Time* cite anonymous sources alleging that a shipment of U.S.-made TOW anti-tank missiles left Israel for Iran in November 1982.

According to the *Time* report, the shipment was sold to Iranian middleman Farouk Azzizi, whom *Time* identified as the primary buyer for the Tehran government. The arms were initially routed through Amsterdam and then on to Iran. At the time the Israeli government denied having violated a U.S. embargo on the sale of U.S. manufactured arms to Iran.

In *These Times* has independently confirmed the *Time* account of the 1982 Israeli arms shipment to Iran. An Israeli intelligence source told *In These Times* that the Israeli government could accurately claim that there was no violation of U.S. policy because the U.S. government knew about the missile sale in advance and approved of it. According to the source, the TOW shipment was cleared through then-U.S. Ambassador to Israel Samuel Lewis, and Israel was subsequently allowed to replenish its TOW

stocks from U.S. supplies. The source estimated the shipment at either 1,250 or 2,500 missiles, depending on whether one or two 707 or DC-8 cargo aircraft were used to transport the missiles to Amsterdam.

These allegations significantly contradict the conclusions of the Tower Commission and the Senate Select Intelligence Committee, which hold that U.S.-sanctioned sales of arms to Iran did not begin until mid-1985. An American intelligence officer, who had himself been involved in arms shipment to Iran, confirmed to *In These Times* that Israel had repeatedly sold large quantities of U.S.-made arms in the early '80s. This official asserted that all the transactions had State Department approval. He went on to relate how, by 1985, the market was crowded with Americans, both in government and the private sector, trying to sell arms to Ayatollah Khomeini's regime: "If you looked like you even knew how to spell Iran you were on board."

Samuel Lewis, former U.S. ambassador to Israel, when reached at his home in McClean, Va., refused to comment on these reports. "I will neither confirm it or deny it," Lewis said. "I don't want to talk about it."

R.R.

Tower report protects NSC's "creative impulses"

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

THE TOWER COMMISSION WAS MANDATED TO study the procedures rather than the policy of the National Security Council (NSC), and its major recommendations pertained to the operation of the NSC rather than to the specifics of the Iran and contra scandals. Former NSC Adviser Brent Scowcroft summed up the commission's approach this way: "We think the problem was the people, not the process."

In its report, the commission insisted that the scandals were the result of "unprofessionalism." In the concluding section of its report, it proposed voluntary changes from within, but rejected every significant legal reform that has been proposed for the NSC, including Senate confirmation of the national security adviser and the restriction of its operational role. "Our review validates the current National Security Council system," the report states.

But the NSC's legal structure laid the basis for the scandal. The Tower report shows that the White House consciously took advantage of the NSC's ambiguous legal definition in

trying to get around the Boland Amendment that Congress passed in 1984 forbidding any military aid to the contras.

The NSC was created in 1947. Because the NSC members were supposed to provide a purely advisory role to the president, they were not made subject to Senate confirmation and cannot be required to appear before congressional committees investigating foreign policy. (See *In These Times*, Dec. 10, 1986).

The NSC and its head, the national security adviser, did not become significant until President Richard Nixon took office in 1969. Nixon decided to use the NSC under National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger not merely to formulate but to implement a foreign policy contrary to his public policy and to the policies recommended by his own State and Defense Departments and by Congress.

Following the Nixon precedent, the Reagan administration used the NSC to implement the Iran arms deals and the illegal support for the contras. Even though the NSC was engaged in covert activities, NSC members used the fact that the NSC was legally defined as an advisory or coordinating body

to get around the Boland Amendment.

The Boland Amendment prohibited the Defense Department, the CIA and any other agency or entity "involved in intelligence activities" from directly or indirectly supporting military operations in Nicaragua. But National Security Adviser John Poindexter secured a legal opinion from the President's Intelligence Oversight Board that the amendment didn't apply to the NSC because its "prescribed role...was to coordinate rather than implement covert action," the report said.

At the same time, the NSC staff could invoke the NSC's legal definition to justify its covert activities. Because the NSC's charter did not specifically forbid it from implement-

The Tower report rejected every significant legal reform that has been proposed for the NSC.

ing policy, its members were not doing anything wrong when they aided the contras.

The Tower Commission rejected, however, any "substantive change" in the NSC's charter that would prevent the NSC staff from engaging in policy implementation. "The in-

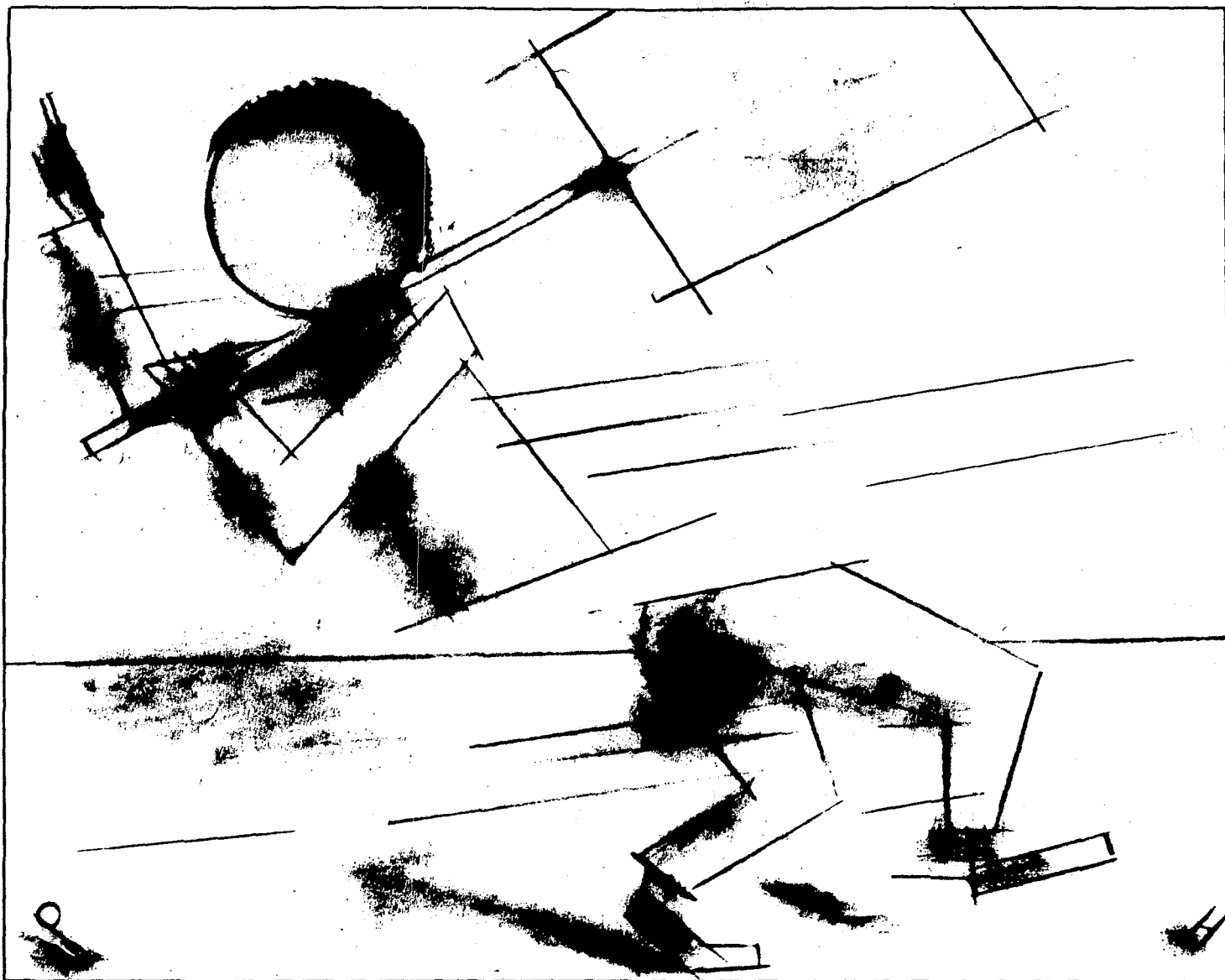
flexibility of legislative restriction should be avoided," the report argued.

It also reinforced the view that the NSC serves a useful function in counteracting the inertia of the Pentagon and State Department bureaucracies. These large institutions, the report states, "tend to resist policy change," while the NSC is the means by which "the creative impulses of the president are brought to bear on the permanent government."

As the report shows, this was exactly what the Reagan administration NSC believed. When the State and Defense Departments rejected the NSC staff's contention that a Soviet takeover in Iran was imminent and that the U.S. should try to re-establish influence in Iran by selling it weapons, NSC staff member Howard Teicher complained that the State and Defense Departments' reactions had brought consideration of a new policy to "a standstill." "It was clear there was no give and there wasn't any more creativity," Teicher said.

In his speech on March 4 President Reagan announced the appointment of an NSC legal adviser—a post recommended by the Tower Commission—and the institution of an order barring NSC member from engaging in covert activity. These steps may improve the conduct of the NSC during the last two Reagan years, but they will not prevent another scandal one administration down the road. □

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Marching, but in the right direction?

By Salim Muwakkil

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE DEMONSTRATED against racist violence and injustice in the first two months of 1987, leading some to speculate that a new movement for social justice is being born. This recent upsurge in direct action also has stimulated a vigorous debate among black leaders on whether techniques from the civil rights movement of the '60s are effective in the post-civil rights era.

The fuse was lit for this explosion of social activism in New York City, where up to 10,000 people have marched to protest various incidents of racially inspired violence against African-Americans. A week following the December 20 incident in the Howard Beach section of Queens—in which one black man was killed and two others assaulted for being in the wrong neighborhood—nearly 3,000 people marched in protest through that notoriously insular white community. Two weeks later, 2,000 gathered for an anti-racism rally in Brooklyn. And on January 21, an estimated 5,000 boisterous demonstrators marched through midtown Manhattan, focusing their ire on the Howard Beach incident but widening the scope to include a host of other grievances.

Youth leadership: Rev. Benjamin Chavis, head of the New York-based United Church of Christ's Commission on Racial Justice, said that city's demonstrations were noteworthy for several reasons. "But the most gratifying reason was it was organized and led primarily by African-American youth."

Chavis said he saw a new, more aggressive generation of leadership taking charge. "With the march," he added, "African-American youth of the New York City area served notice that they will be pushing to the fore-

front of decision-making on issues that affect not only young people, but the entire African-American community."

The prominence of young people in the demonstrators' front ranks evoked for Chavis the memory of the civil rights movement's early days, when leaders of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Student Organization for Black Unity (SOBU) were leading the protests of the early '60s. "It was the young sit-in student leaders who continued to inject new lifeblood into the organizations and protests of that time," explained Chavis, who as leader of the "Wilmington 10"—a famous group of North Carolina protesters—was himself an important student leader of that era. "The youths who spoke at the [Manhattan] march were extremely aware of this history."

Youth leadership also played a significant role in the massive January 24 demonstration in Forsyth County, Ga., about 40 miles north of Atlanta, where 25,000 people marched to protest the racist rebuff of an earlier "brotherhood" march. While organizers of the protest expected no more than 5,000 participants, the ranks of the marchers swelled to five times that number, making it the largest such event since the '60s. Most of those unexpected protesters were young ones from neighboring colleges.

Rev. Hosea Williams, an Atlanta city council member and former aide to Rev. Martin Luther King who was slightly injured in the first Forsyth County march, said the second demonstration represented a "rebirth of the movement to make the American dream become a new reality." Before the march, Williams conducted several "training sessions in non-violence" for hundreds of young people at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church—the place many credit with being the genesis

point of the civil rights movement.

"The energy and enthusiasm of these youngsters was amazing," Williams told *In These Times*. "It was clear that all this talk about student apathy was just wishful thinking on the part of the powers in Washington."

March organizers said one of the most incredible aspects of the event was that it was

CIVIL RIGHTS

pulled together in such a short time. "Although we only had four days to organize this demonstration, the spirit had been building for quite some time," said student organizer Charles Smoot, a junior at Atlanta's Morehouse College.

A clash of tactics: Many are touting this new surge of protest energy as a new civil rights movement, but others, while applauding the activity, urge more judicious language. "It's misleading to call this a 'civil rights movement,'" said Rep. John Lewis, the

"Rather than marching on Cummings, Ga. ...we should channel our collective energies into developing our own material and human resources so that [black] communities would be as inviting to other people as theirs apparently are to us."

newly elected Democratic congressman from Georgia and a movement veteran. "I like to call it a human rights or human needs movement."

Lewis said that although racism remains a problem, it's only part of a larger problem, and is no longer sanctioned by law. Unemployment, teenage pregnancy, under-education, hunger, homelessness, individuals' health care costs and an unchecked militarism are the major problems of 1987, Lewis maintained. Still, he joined the Forsyth County protest, praising it as a harbinger of better days. "The march was more than a one-shot deal. We are on the verge of something. Political movements come in cycles, and I think another cycle is upon us."

But Lewis' depressing checklist of ills presents a daunting challenge, even to those who welcome the rise of a new political movement. Most of the problems he noted are associated with the growth of the black underclass, and marches have limited relevance to those millions of African-Americans trapped in that category.

Not only are those traditional modes of protest irrelevant to the contemporary problems of the black community, they are an "exercise in dissipation," according to Robert Woodson, president of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise in Washington, D.C. He said the black leaders who are pushing those demonstrations are stuck in a tradition that is out of synch with history and that diverts attention from African-Americans' real problems.

"More people are killed in black-on-black murder every day than were killed by the Ku Klux Klan in 20 years," Woodson said. He argued that black people would be better served by leaders who focused their energy on developing new ways to channel economic resources into black communities.

Woodson is one of several emerging black leaders who challenge the traditional methods of the civil rights movement. Their ideas are commonly characterized as "neoconservative," but their message of self-reliance and economic independence differs little from the rhetoric of "revolutionary" leaders in Third World countries and domestic black nationalists.

Consider, for example, the similarities between Woodson's views and those of the Nation of Islam (NOI). "Rather than marching on Cummings, Ga., Washington, D.C., or anywhere else, we should channel our collective energies into developing our own material and human resources so that our communities would be as inviting to other people as theirs apparently are to us," read an editorial in the NOI's news organ, *The Final Call*.

Some of those sentiments are shared by many who advocate more "traditional" approaches. Roger Wilkins, a senior research fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, a liberal think tank in Washington, D.C., told the *New York Times* last month, "I don't think the marches in those communities are going to remedy the fundamental problems of black poverty, black unemployment or teenage pregnancies." But, he said, "the events of Howard Beach and Forsyth County give people who are experts on American social conditions a chance to talk about the real problems."

The protest boom: While new approaches are being formulated, the old problems persist and are being challenged by an aggressive nationwide return to proven tac-

Continued on page 10

By Diana Johnstone

AS RONALD REAGAN'S FANTASY-WORLD foreign policy dissipates from exposure to the light of reality, the only reasonable future course of East-West relations is being set in Moscow and Bonn. The World Anti-Communist League, which has been using the White House as its operational headquarters, is not going to like this, but it seems to be a sure thing.

The first official Western echo to Mikhail Gorbachov's "new mentality" came on February 1 from West German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher in his major speech to an elite public of Western business and government leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Fresh from his January 25 electoral victory, Genscher's message was: "Let's take Gorbachov seriously, let's take him at his word."

Genscher insisted that the West must come up with a positive response to what Gorbachov calls the Soviet Union's "new thinking" and "new policy." Genscher perceives that this new policy of "openness" is not a ploy to fool the West but a necessity for the Soviet Union's transition from the industrial to the information age.

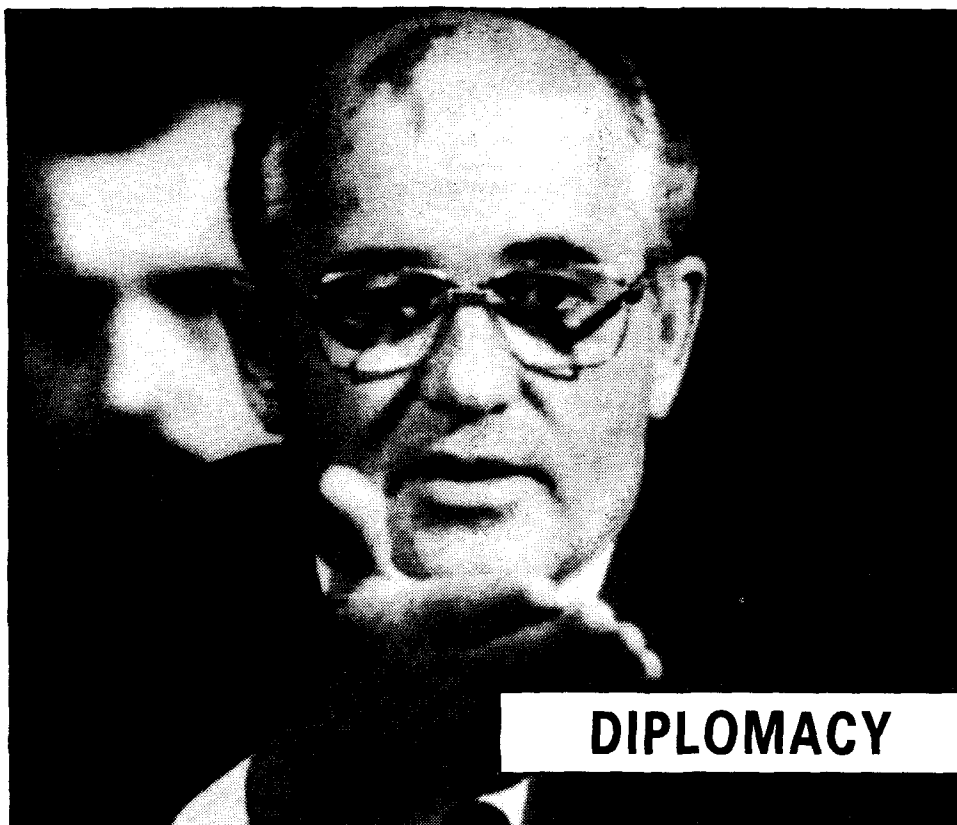
To reach his central goal of accelerated growth and technological progress, "Gorbachov needs people who are motivated toward achievement, that are ready to take responsibility, that are creative. This requires a more open information policy, the call for constructive criticism, the demand for improvement of legal protection. The lifting of the banishment of dissident Andrei Sakharov is thus not only a signal to the West, but first of all a clear signal to his own society," Genscher told the Davos gathering.

"Gorbachov has recognized modernization of the economy doesn't work without modernizing and opening of society both inside and toward the outside. It isn't a matter of democracy in the Western sense, but of creating greater possibilities for social development within the limits of the system," he continued.

What Gorbachov needs: Gorbachov needs "quiet on the foreign front. He must avoid higher armament costs, and he must first of all seek to prevent his economy from being forced by the Strategic Defense Initiative (or Star Wars) into a technological arms race that it can manage only with difficulty, and for which it is ill prepared because of being behind in information technology. In a word, Gorbachov needs a new foreign policy," the West German foreign minister said, noting significant changes of position in comparison to the Brezhnev era.

Genscher said that Gorbachov's "new themes" such as "mutual dependence" of nations, environmental problems and international cooperation for mutual survival add up to a "view of things corresponding to the insights of responsible Western policy."

With obvious approval, Genscher then cited Gorbachov at length: "The character of modern weapons leaves no single state the hope of protecting itself alone through military-technical means, through the creation of a defense system, however powerful. The achievement of security takes on more and more the character of a political task, therefore it can be solved only with political means. Speaking of USSR-U.S. relations, se-



Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov wants "respect for others, along with objective self-critical evaluation of one's own society."

Bonn and Moscow look to new East-West 'mentality'

curity can only be mutual, and taking international relations as a whole, it can only be common. The highest wisdom lies not in thinking exclusively of oneself to the disadvantage of the other side. All must feel equally secure."

Genscher did not say so, but Gorbachov's policy owes much to the thinking of northern European Social Democracy on "common security" and to the report of the same name issued by the Olaf Palme Commission in 1982. If Gorbachov's deeds match his words, "it is obvious" that such a policy is in the Western interest, said Genscher. A Soviet Union that opens up is "a better partner for ensuring peace."

He reiterated that for West Germany the only possible policy is "realistic detente" based on both loyalty to the Western alliance and an effort to seek more stable East-West relations.

Just as it would be illusory to throw all weapons away today, said Genscher, "so it would be wrong on the other hand to be blind to the possibilities of a new development in East-West relations."

To find out whether this opportunity really exists we have to test it, without illusions and without prejudices, the German foreign minister said. "If today the chance should exist to reach a turning point after 40 years of confrontation in East-West relations, then it would be an error of historic proportions for the West to let this chance pass, only because it cannot get out of the way of thinking of the Soviet Union always and only in terms of the worst case. 'Worst case analysis' is necessary but should not determine policy. If it did, we would become politically incapacitated."

Genscher called for an "active political strategy" of responding to Gorbachov with this answer: "If deeds follow words the West is a constructive partner for such a develop-

ment." The West should announce its readiness for a "comprehensive disarmament process" aiming at "the right to equal security for all."

In the second place, the West should announce its readiness to undertake "large-scale economic cooperation that helps the Soviet Union modernize its economy, that develops this gigantic country rich in natural resources and that brings us growth and jobs."

The bottom line: A Soviet Union dedicated to peaceful development and ready to buy technology is a godsend to the Western economies, and to the West Germans above all. The USSR is the biggest potential market for the biggest exporting nation, West Germany. Moreover, Germany's other customers are so overburdened with debt that their future ability to absorb exports is in grave doubt, whereas the Soviets can pay. It is obvious that such a course beats the nuclear arms race by every rational standard.

Indirectly criticizing Reagan administration attitudes, Genscher warned that it "would be dangerous if instead of encouraging new developments we should succumb to the illusion that the Soviet Union is acting from a situation of weakness that should be exploited or made worse. Firmness is called for, but a policy of strength, of striving for superiority, of arming the other side into a corner, must once and for all belong to the mental categories of the past—in the West, too. Such an attitude can only lead humanity to catastrophe."

This "change of mentality" was the theme of Gorbachov's February 16 address to the international forum in Moscow calling "for a world without nuclear arms, for the survival of humanity." He emphasized that a "new political mentality" is required for humanity to survive in the nuclear age. Such an axiom as Clausewitz's famous "war is the extension of politics by other means" has been made

obsolete by Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Soviet leader observed. Nuclear war would not be an extension of politics but would wipe out all sides. Competition must take "civilized forms worthy of 21st-century humanity," without old dogmas and stereotypes.

Gorbachov warned that "it is too late to hope that things will work out by themselves." He then noted that the accumulation of nuclear weapons has made humans "technically capable" of ending their existence, while the "accumulation of explosive social material" is making the catastrophe quite probable politically. Gorbachov warned that "militarization of mentalities and ways of life weakens or eliminates the moral brakes on the movement toward nuclear suicide."

Respect for others: The "new mentality" that Gorbachov sees as necessary involves "respect for others, along with objective self-critical evaluation of one's own society; this is cruelly lacking in current international relations.... The new political mentality is called on to confer a new quality to civilization...it is not solely a matter of correcting positions, but a methodology of conducting international affairs."

Among the 900 people from around the world attending Gorbachov's peace forum were a dozen top West German executives from such major trade partners as Krupp, Ruhrgas and Mannesmann. One of them, Friedrich Wilhelm Christians of the Deutsche Bank, told the German newsweekly *Der Spiegel* upon his return from Moscow that the greatest danger to Gorbachov's reforms came from the Soviet people themselves. Gorbachov risks going too fast and demanding too much of them. The people are materially better off than ever before, the West German banker observed: "They all have jobs, they all have a roof over their heads, they can buy clothes, travel and educate their children."

Having provided all this, Christians said, the Soviet Union lacks the "main motivation" for development: poverty and need. Thus Gorbachov must "appeal to intelligence."

As a lifelong art collector, the banker said he was extremely impressed by the avant-garde art exhibits he saw during his trip to Moscow. This convinced him "something decisively new" is going on.

He certainly hopes so, because he is convinced that China and the Soviet Union are "the markets of the future." The Deutsche Bank is getting ready to help facilitate the joint ventures proposed by the Soviet Union, especially with small German companies that have special know-how.

There remains a problem: COCOM. That is the secretive "coordination committee" that operates out of Paris saying what technology can or cannot be exported to Communist countries, supposedly on military security grounds. The current big power in COCOM is U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle, who at a recent Munich symposium made himself even more unpopular than he already was (see *In These Times*, Jan. 28) by calling European leaders "mealy-mouthed."

Christians called the COCOM list a "constant irritation" that must be reformed.

Thus the green light from Gorbachov is hastening a German-Soviet rapprochement that has everything going for it from economic self-interest to the need to save the world from nuclear annihilation. □

Civil rights

Continued from page 8
tics:

• In Montgomery, Ala., blacks marched to the State Capitol to protest racism in the state government's executive and legislative branches. Black Democrats in Alabama charge they have been systematically excluded from positions of power in the state.

• Nearly 1,000 demonstrators gathered at the courthouse in Louisville, Ky., on January 31 to protest the burning of an official, publicly displayed photograph of Martin Luther King by members of the Ku Klux Klan.

• When Arizona Gov. Evan Mecham rescinded the holiday honoring King, an angry group of protesters marched down Phoenix's streets and presented thousands of petitions to legislators urging them to re-establish the holiday.

• A contingent of about 120 "reverse freedom riders" from cities throughout the South, traveled to Chicago to help supporters of Mayor Harold Washington register voters in the city's black communities, making explicit the strong connection between the civil rights movement and the campaigns to elect black mayors.

• In Hutchinson, Kan., the house of the black woman who organized the city's tribute to King was vandalized by those opposed to the holiday. Nearly 400 people marched and rallied outside city hall protesting the action and demanding redress.

• Several small demonstrations have been staged on college campuses across the country to protest what researchers confirm is an increase in the number of racist incidents. **The pendulum swings:** Atlanta's Williams said the various protesters are caught

up in a spirit nourished by the insensitivities of the national political leadership. He said this new energy follows years of fear and anger at the Reagan administration's "indifference to civil rights and poor people." He added: "These demonstrators are saying to the country that they are tired of Ronald Reagan destroying federal programs that help blacks get into the mainstream of American life." Williams said the Reaganites primarily are responsible for the "slipping away of gains we won over 30 years."

Williams, however, supported Ronald Reagan in the 1980 presidential election and, at that time, his critics bitterly accused him of helping to pave the way for just such a decline in blacks' status. In those days he based his support for Reagan on the notion that Democrats had done little for the black community and had corrupted black leadership by offering political crumbs instead of programs designed to permanently improve conditions for African-Americans.

His argument was nearly identical to that now being proffered by the black neoconservatives. Williams changed, he conceded, because he underestimated the magnitude of the problems confronting black America and the absolute need for focused federal assistance. But Williams' critics again have accused him of altering his ideology to fit the national mood.

"Hosea may not be consistent, but he has an incredible ability to forecast the political climate," said one of Williams' former colleagues in the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) who wished to remain anonymous. "He sensed the pendulum swinging to Reaganomics and he swung with it. Now, apparently, it's swinging the other way." □

Omissions

Continued from page 7

arms sales, the U.S. government rarely interfered with the deals, apparently acting only when administration officials believed the secrecy of the official, government-to-government deals was threatened.

The contras and drug smuggling: Over the past two years many newspaper articles have linked the contras to drug smuggling. These stories are of interest to Irangate watchers because profits from the sale of arms to Tehran were channeled into the contra supply network, a loose organization of right-wing groups and paramilitary outfits supervised by the same Reagan operatives (North, Secord and John Singlaub) who oversaw the weapons deals. Among the stories the Archive recaps are the following:

1. It summarized reports in the *Miami Herald* and the *Village Voice* concerning the activities and eventual murder in February of last year of Barry Seal, a drug smuggler who allegedly tried to implicate the Sandinistas in cocaine activities at the request of the Reagan administration officials. Seal reportedly had first-hand knowledge of contra drug-smuggling activities.

2. Max Gomez, who later worked with George Bush on the contra supply effort, was linked in 1984 by the *Miami Herald* and the *New York Times* to a prominent Miami arms and drugs dealer;

3. According to a report in the *Miami News*, Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) in November of last year filed a request with the Justice Department requesting immunity for an FBI informant who told Kerry's staff of U.S. involvement in narcotics trafficking to aid the contras.

Cash ransom for hostages: The Tower report accepts the widely-held assertion that the administration sold arms to Iran in order to buy Iranian influence over the Shiite militiamen holding American hostages. Mideastern sources, however, told *In These Times* that Iranian influence over Lebanese paramilitary organizations was relatively limited, and said it was common practice for these groups to demand a cash ransom for their prisoners. *In These Times* sources speculate that some money from the arms deals may have been diverted to pay ransoms. The Archive cites the following related stories:

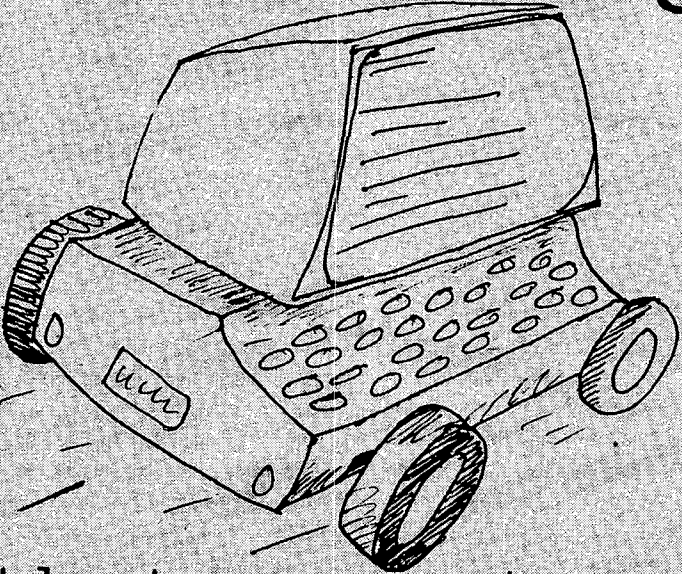
1. According to the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Miami Herald*, following the 1984 kidnapping of CIA agent William Buckley in Beirut Oliver North approached Texas millionaire H. Ross Perot and requested \$1 million in order to ransom Buckley. Ransom negotiations apparently failed.

2. Two French hostages released in June of 1986 cost the French government \$2.2 million in ransom, according to the *New York Times*.

The issues raised by the Archive's chronology have received scant attention, in part due to the fact that few copies are available. (The Archive is reportedly considering publishing additional copies.) Nevertheless, the National Security Archive's document shows that the Tower Commission's report leaves many questions unanswered—questions that will prevent the Reagan administration from putting the Iran/contras scandal behind it. □

Richard Ryan is Washington correspondent for the *Texas Observer*. He has been covering Irangate for *In These Times*. **Jim Naureckas** contributed to this article.

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By Pippa Green

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD THE Southern African subcontinent has undergone its most significant shift since the decolonization of most of Africa two decades ago. It is a shift beset by contradictions and policy is still in flux. But for the first time in more than a quarter century the U.S. has officially acknowledged the central place of the popular African National Congress (ANC) in the struggle against apartheid in white-ruled South Africa.

The change was noted by ANC President Oliver Tambo when he spoke in January at a reception held in his honor in New York. Addressing some of the city's most powerful businessmen, financiers and policy makers Tambo recalled "how far we have traveled since the day when I first met the American Committee on Africa in 1952 to discuss their support for us in the Defiance Campaign against racially discriminatory laws in South Africa."

January's meeting between Secretary of State George Shultz and Tambo was the first official U.S. recognition accorded to the ANC since it was outlawed by the South African government 27 years ago. The meeting went ahead despite the fact that the ANC has not changed two tenets of its policy which the U.S. government has pointed to as unpalatable: endorsement of armed struggle and its alliance with the South African Communist Party.

The right to fight: Tambo made clear a week before he met with Shultz that the controversial positions had not changed. Addressing about 3,000 people who had crowded into a Manhattan church to hear the exiled leader, he said: "No one has the right to demand peaceful behavior of us until we are free. Furthermore, no one should demand that we seek change through non-violent means when all constitutional avenues to redress grievances are denied to the majority in South Africa."

And in a clear reference to the State Department's discomfort with the ANC's political allies, Tambo argued that "the struggles of people in South Africa must be supported on their own terms. The democrats of the United States should support our struggle by allowing us the right to have our history, our own national expression and the right to decide what is best for us." He chastised "people who are making it a condition of support that we reproduce ourselves in their own image."

So when Tambo met with Shultz it was not as a consequence of renunciation of previous policies or practices. Where, then, does the change come from?

Principally, from changes within South Africa itself, says Bill Minter, author of *King Solomon's Mines Revisited*, a major new study on U.S. foreign policy toward southern Africa, "It is now clear to anyone that the ANC is one of the major parties to deal with."

And Jennifer Davis, director of the oldest anti-apartheid group in the U.S., the American Committee on Africa, also attributes the symbolic shift to the "rapidly changing events inside South Africa and the growing strength of the movement here."

But anti-apartheid campaigners in the U.S. are wary about proclaiming any major change of heart on the part of the State Department toward the liberation movement in South Africa.

The recent Shultz Committee report on



SOUTH AFRICA

ANC President Tambo on relations with the U.S.: "How far we have traveled."

U.S. shifts its approach to African National Congress

South Africa denounced President Reagan's policy of "constructive engagement." Keeping close ties with the white-minority Pretoria government was a failure. The report recommended an international program of economic sanctions if Pretoria remains intransigent. But Minter warns that "the shift only goes so far. The Shultz Committee uses cautious language and their view is definitely not the view of the administration." Rather, he says, the administration has adopted the position of the three committee members who signed a minority report.

Minority opinion: The three, General Motors Chairman Roger Smith, former Undersecretary of State Laurence Eagleburger and former Republican Congressman John Dellenback, argued that increased sanctions against South Africa were "wasteful and counterproductive."

As Minter explains: "The guiding principle of policy toward South Africa until now has been that Pretoria is an ally to be encouraged on the road to reform rather than an enemy to be forced. If the advice of the committee were taken it would significantly shift that position."

But the committee's report—and, indeed, Tambo's reception in the U.S.—has put previous policy under a spotlight. This is partly as a result of the U.S. anti-apartheid movement's effective and high-powered campaign in response to escalating conflict in South Africa. The movement has changed the parameters of the South Africa debate. Economic sanctions are no longer a fringe, radical demand, but part of the debate of the political mainstream.

"We believe," said the committee, which was appointed by the State Department in 1985 in an attempt to ward off sanctions, "that the urgency of the situation demands...a multilateral program of sanctions...unless the South African government releases all political prisoners, unbans the ANC

...and terminates the state of emergency" by October this year.

It is the "unless" and the deadline which worry anti-apartheid campaigners. "It is significant that they are no longer taking the position that sanctions are impossible, but they are still playing around with 'ifs,'" said Davis. And two committee members, United Auto Workers (UAW) President Owen Beiber and Rev. Leon Sullivan, author of the Sullivan Principles for U.S. firms in South Africa, also believed the report was too cautious. "It is a significant rebuff to the policy of 'constructive engagement,'" said a UAW spokesman after the report's release, "but it does not go nearly far enough to dismantle apartheid."

Beiber also recommended an immediate end to U.S. military aid to the Angolan rebel movement UNITA, which is also backed by the South African government. The committee noted only that U.S. backing of UNITA and "the failure to deliver a long-promised settlement in Namibia" had alienated South African blacks from the U.S.

The Frontline connection: It is not clear whether or how the State Department will implement the committee's recommendation to give development aid to the Frontline States—an alliance of black-ruled nations in southern Africa (see *In These Times*, Feb. 18). But the crucial connection between U.S. anti-apartheid policy and policy toward other countries in the subcontinent has been made.

Minter points out that all other countries in southern Africa—even those that have co-operated with South Africa—have been militarily attacked by Pretoria. Angola and Mozambique have been particular targets in what Pretoria says are its efforts to wipe out the ANC. Certainly in the case of Angola, Minter argues, the U.S.—by example—gave South Africa a green light to intervene.

The anti-apartheid movement will campaign to increase U.S. support for the

Frontline States. But because the right wing is quick to portray southern Africa as a Cold War arena, it might prove a more arduous task than even the imposition of sanctions against South Africa.

"It all depends how it's argued," says Minter. "The fact is that the majority of U.S. politicians know little or nothing about southern Africa and it is not an exaggeration to say that a considerable number of congressmen would be unable to locate Angola or Mozambique on a map. So a vote is less likely to be weighted by an analysis of the situation than by whether the issue is portrayed as one about racism or one about communism."

A supposed battle against communism is the crux of the right wing's pressure on the State Department not to acknowledge the ANC. Jeane Kirkpatrick, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, rapped the State Department in a recent *New York Times* column for "actively contributing to the reputation and legitimization of the ANC and making it a principle alternative to apartheid."

The Inkatha option: Shriller warnings about communism emanate from a church group in Kentucky, which for the past few weeks have been distributing free of charge an anti-ANC "Action Package," consisting of literature, a professionally made video entitled *ANC: A Time for Candor and Clarion Call*, a glossy magazine published by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha organization, a Zulu group billed by the U.S. government as "moderate."

While some of the "Action Package" might be dismissed as fringe right-wing agitation, its cries have resonances in the American body politic. It is perhaps no coincidence that pro-Inkatha literature is distributed in the same package. Inkatha has long been promoted by the Reagan administration and its supporters as the viable alternative to both apartheid and the ANC in South Africa.

The committee's report and Shultz's meeting with Tambo indicate that the "Inkatha option" is being reconsidered. U.S. officials and the AFL-CIO's American Africa Labor Center (AALC) watched closely when Chief Buthelezi launched his pro-investment, pro-free enterprise union, United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA), as a rival to the 600,000-strong Congress of South African Trade Unions. But as 1986 wore on the Inkatha union failed to attract not only non-Zulu workers but the majority of unionized Zulu workers, too.

There are signs, too, that the State Department is adopting a more pragmatic approach to the ANC's alliance with the South African Communist Party. In its report on the subject, the State Department concluded that if ANC's relations with Western countries improved, or if Pretoria conceded to negotiations, "serious policy differences [between the nationalists and the communists] could surface within the ANC."

The anti-apartheid movement sees its battle to isolate and weaken apartheid as just beginning. There was hope in the ANC leader's voice when he spoke at the New York reception: "The struggle in South Africa has been very rough the past two years. But it is precisely in the past two years that we have found apartheid's weakness, because it is at the moment of its extreme brutality that the people of [the U.S.] have realized that it is a monster they can help kill." □

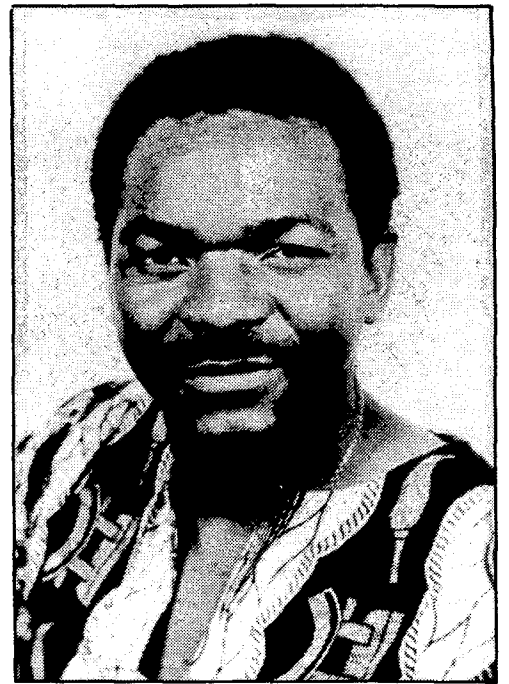
Pippa Green is a South African journalist who has written for the *South African Labour Bulletin*, the *Weekly Mail* of Johannesburg and the *Argus* of Cape Town. She is currently based in New York.

IN THESE TIMES MARCH 11-17, 1987 11

PILGRIMS FOR PROGRESS



A white rabbi
and a black minister
— both South African —
tell U.S. audiences that
the only answer to
apartheid is democracy.



By Russell Miller

SABBATH SERVICES ARE OVER, THE BLESSINGS over wine and bread have been made and the social hall of Manhattan's Temple B'nai Jeshurun is pleasantly buzzing with the usual Saturday morning chats: kids, condo, the week's events.

Several congregants stand around one of the guest speakers, Rabbi Ben Isaacson of Congregation Har-El in Johannesburg, South Africa, to thank him for his moving talk and to express support for his good work. Since the end of January, Rabbi Isaacson has been traveling across the U.S. with Rev. Zachariah Mokgoebo, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Soweto. They preach—a white rabbi and a black minister—a common message: the only answer to apartheid is democracy, and democracy in South Africa means black majority rule.

One voice jumps out of the hum in the social hall. The accent is South African, but not Rabbi Isaacson's:

"There are just as many decent white people in South Africa as there are decent black people, and you don't say that. That's not important to you." Well-wishers cringe back, leaving Isaacson and his tall challenger at the center of a tense little circle. "With all that whites have done for blacks, with all

the progress that's been made, you want them to give everything up."

"No," Isaacson retorts. "I want them to give it back."

The challenger leans in, snarling. "That's bullshit. Bullshit."

Then someone takes the challenger's arm, ushers him out of the hall; the reception continues. A half-hour later, Rabbi Isaacson is on West 88th Street, telling the story to Rev. Mokgoebo.

"Zach, you didn't see him, the dirty little racist—I wanted to hit him. It's a good thing you weren't there—the little pig." And the elegantly dressed rabbi who has traveled halfway around the world to deliver a plea for human rights opens his mouth, sticks in his finger, pretends to gag. And breaks up laughing.

It's a movement laugh—the kind you laugh when you're safe among friends, and the enemy's far away and can't hurt you, and you know you're right and the enemy's a fool and you know you're going to win. It's the laugh of the righteous. These days, in synagogues, churches and meeting halls across the U.S., Ben Isaacson is sounding very righteous. Listen to him preach:

"I say to the Jewish people, 'You want the Torah, you accept the First Commandment: 'I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.' God's a liberator god. God is a political god. That's a political statement if ever there was one—we don't have to argue about liberation theology. Or else make up your mind! Give the Commandment back! Tell God you only want nine!"

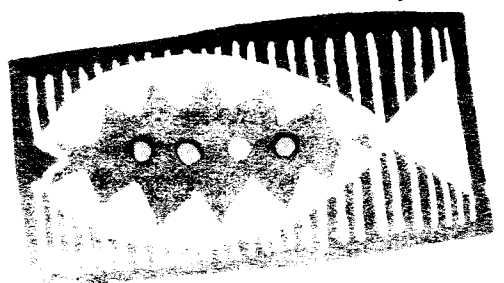
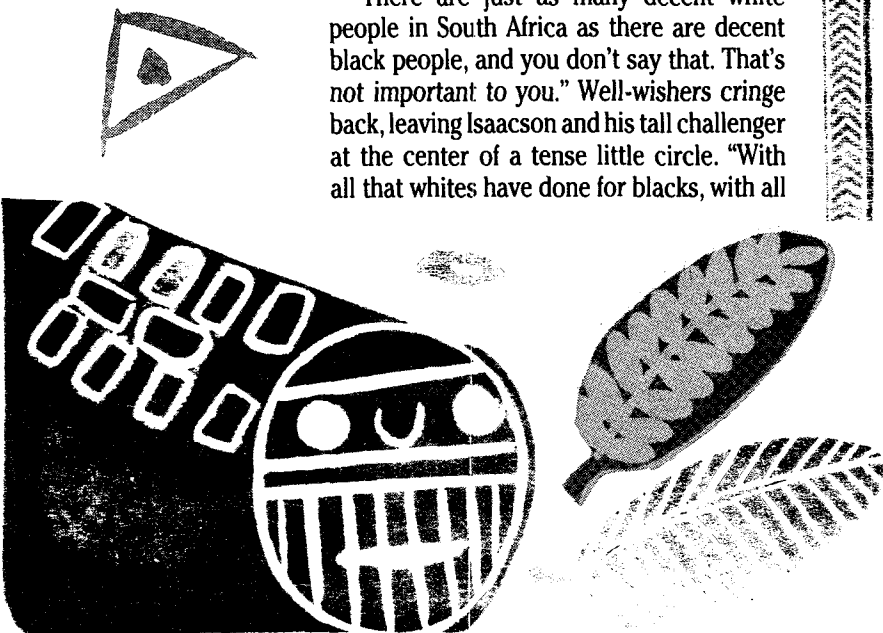
On a mission: Rabbi Isaacson and Rev. Mokgoebo are talking with blacks and Jews in 23 cities across the U.S. They're preaching to congregations, briefing community lead-

ers and meeting privately with philanthropists who may give them money to open an interfaith, interracial "Center for Religion and Peace" in Johannesburg. They've made their pitches so many times that, as Isaacson said to one group, "we got confused the other night and gave each other's speeches."

It was a good warm-up line, but no one bought it. Ben Isaacson and Zachariah Mokgoebo may be working together, but they're working two different jobs.

In South Africa, Rev. Mokgoebo is in sync with his public. He's a religious leader, a government opponent and a supporter of his people. When he speaks, he bears witness to the tension and the struggle and the daily dilemmas of a religious life under apartheid. "What do you do," he asks, "when students come to you with a tire in one hand and a five-liter gasoline can in the other hand and they say, 'Reverend, this person is a collaborator and we've got evidence—what must we do with him?' It's a question," Mokgoebo says, "of credibility."

Rabbi Isaacson is in the same struggle. But he is, in his words, "not even on the fringe" of his community. He says that speaking against apartheid has lost him his pulpit three times in three different congregations. He says, "It's a number of years now that I've wanted to be in a synagogue of love and sympathy, where people are not there in order to spy on me, or even to inform the authorities on what I've said in my latest



sermon." Rev. Mokgoebo is here to tell what it's like to be black in South Africa. Rabbi Isaacson means to tell what it should be like to be Jewish there.

There are 120,000 Jews in South Africa. They're a wealthy community, strong supporters of Israel, beneficiaries of white minority rule and as worried as any other whites about their future in a black-ruled South Africa. Many nervously discuss allegations of anti-Zionism in the African National Congress (ANC), although in the '60s, when Israel denounced apartheid and supported U.N. sanctions against South Africa, it was the white Afrikaner leadership that responded by threatening Jews. Some insist there's no longer any trace of government anti-Semitism. Others remember a generation back, when Afrikaner politicians openly allied with the Nazis.

Ben Isaacson acknowledges that South African Jews are afraid. But the primary fact of their existence, he says, is white skin. In South Africa, he says, "by a peculiar quirk of fate, Jews are part of the master race." They live too well under the racist regime to take truly moral stands. They play liberal reformist politics. Official statements opposing apartheid come from Jewish leaders too little and too late. They avoid, he says, the only moral alternative, the one he has chosen—to cast their lot with the other side.

"If you are against apartheid," he tells his audience, "there's no such thing as reform. How can you reform evil? How can you reform a concentration camp? Put a café in Auschwitz?"

This time, the audience is receptive. It's in New York, not Johannesburg. No one expected supporters of apartheid here, but Isaacson's call for black majority rule doesn't even raise an eyebrow—until the incident in the social hall. Neither does Isaacson's and Mokgoebo's expressed "understanding" of violence as a legitimate response to apartheid.

"The world's very strange," Isaacson told one group. "It says the victims of tyranny mustn't use violence. The oppressors use violence. But you mustn't use violence against the people who are shooting children every day?"

Not an eyebrow rose. In one New Jersey synagogue, a similar statement was greeted with applause. That's the way the tour has been going—"absolutely fantastic," says David Coyne, executive director of New Jewish Agenda, which is co-sponsoring the six-week visit together with the Washington Office on Africa.

Reaching out: "The tour was designed, and those two speakers were selected," Coyne told *In These Times*, "because we felt that there was a special need to reach the Jewish community, so a black voice from South Africa would be heard in synagogues where it might not otherwise be invited, and so Jews could hear [about South Africa] from a Jewish perspective."

Agenda has had mixed success in bringing the black voice and the Jewish perspective around. In some cities, Isaacson and Mokgoebo will speak from the pulpits of large, mainstream synagogues. In New York, home of the largest Jewish population outside Is-

rael, Isaacson and Mokgoebo spoke at three relatively small, liberal congregations, and to the men's club of Temple Emanuel, an upper-crust Reform synagogue on Fifth Avenue.

They were also invited to coffee at the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), the national Reform organization—"just to meet them and hear what they had to say," says Albert Vorspan, director of Reform Judaism's Commission on Social Action. The UAHC has taken a consistent stand against apartheid and in favor of strong U.S. sanctions.

One participant called the coffee a "small, irrelevant meeting." But not Ben Isaacson: "There were representatives from major Jewish organizations there, including a racist from NACRAC [the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council], who we dealt with diplomatically. I think we won the afternoon," he told *In These Times*.

Diana Aviv, who follows South African issues for NACRAC, would not comment on Isaacson's position, except to say that "we need to serve a facilitating role, not an attacking role." That is decidedly not Ben Isaacson's style. He is abrasive, passionate, confident. He works hard to establish his own credentials as an ethical warrior.

In South Africa, says Rev. Mokgoebo, "any pastor, any person's credibility in fighting against racism, any success is measured by the extent to which you are also tortured, you are also a victim, you're also harassed, interrogated by the police." Rabbi Isaacson spends a good portion of his formal talk discussing the costs of his own 27 years in the struggle—harassment, interrogation, economic "sanctions" by his congregations and denunciation by South African Jewish leaders.

"In certain conservative circles [in the U.S.], there were serious doubts about inviting us or sponsoring our visit," Isaacson says. "I think this is part of a general right-wing trend. I think it's also a result of doing some research with the Jewish establishment in South Africa as to 'who is this guy?' Most of the responses were, 'Mokgoebo's O.K., but watch out for Isaacson—he's an irresponsible radical.'"

Some may indeed be watching out for Isaacson. Others may be watching out for New Jewish Agenda, a left-wing newcomer to American Jewish organizational politics. Paul Lehrer, Agenda's chairperson for central New Jersey, said that the local Jewish

Federation, a regional umbrella group, refused to co-sponsor Isaacson and Mokgoebo because of Agenda. David Coyne says Agenda's lack of connections made last-minute arrangements with prominent synagogues and black groups difficult in New York and other cities. But midway through their trip, Rabbi Isaacson and Rev. Mokgoebo had met with local branches of several major Jewish groups and with such black dignitaries as Andrew Young, Richard Hatcher and Ron Dellums.

A Jewish-black coalition: One Friday night, at Congregation B'nei Tikvah in North Brunswick, N.J., Isaacson and Mokgoebo spoke to 250, co-sponsored by four black and anti-apartheid groups, including the local chapter of the NAACP. Rabbi Andrew Warmflash said the turnout was three times the size of a usual Friday and that a quarter of the audience was black. "The speakers talked about the need to reinvigorate a Jewish-black coalition," said Rabbi Warmflash. "It's gotten a lot of people quite excited, and we think it'll have positive repercussions."

Ben Isaacson went further: "I think if we stay in this country much longer, we can run for president. We had the Jews, we had the blacks, we had the Christians, and they said it was the greatest thing that ever happened in that congregation."

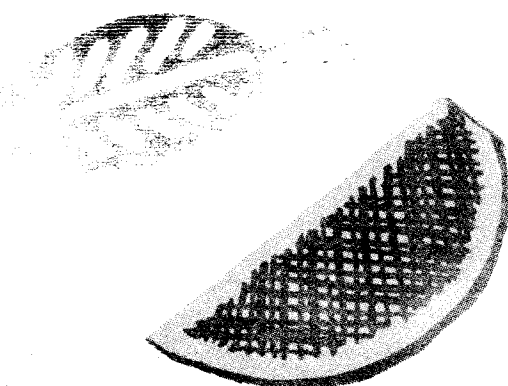
His most vehement opposition, he says, has come from the left, notably from people who call him soft on Israel. "Nuanced on Israel" would better describe his position. Israeli support for South Africa, he says, "fills me with sadness."

"We ask them to desist in strengthening the Pretoria regime," Isaacman says, "but we're not going to join an international lynch mob, as if Israel invented apartheid and Israel is the only backer and supplier of arms and technology—and not the U.S., the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan and France." Then he mentioned Archbishop Desmond Tutu's intention to visit Israel next year, at the invitation of Israeli peace groups. "I hope they will let me out of my cell to join him on that visit," says Isaacson with an ironic smile.

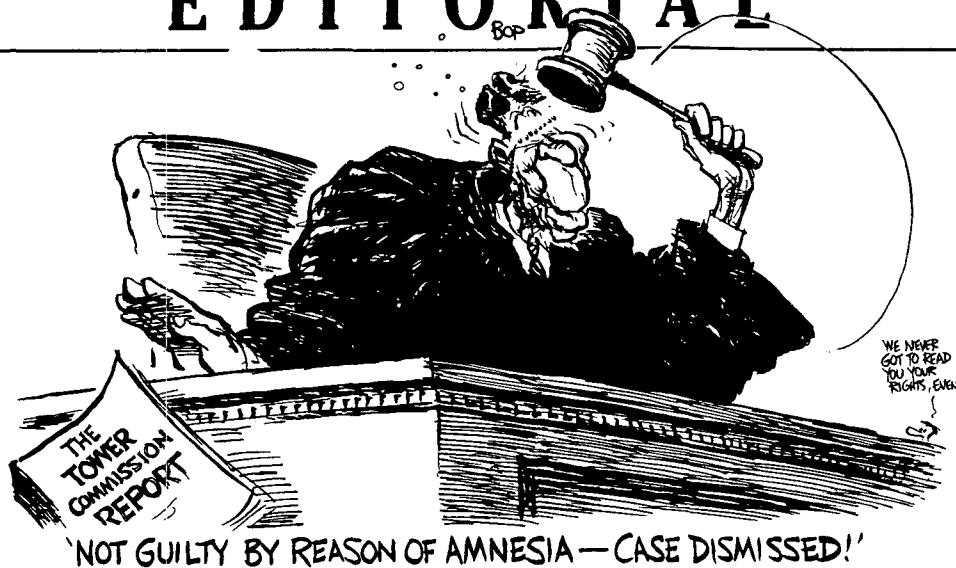
Such nuance is exactly what Ben Isaacson rejects where the central issues of South African life are concerned. "Everybody thinks apartheid is wrong. The question is what to do about it," says Alan Sive, the South African emigrant who confronted Isaacson in the social hall at Manhattan's B'nai Jeshurun. "It's too simplistic," he added, "to talk about this in terms of morality or justice and so forth. One has to talk about it in pragmatic terms."

To Sive and his pragmatism, Rabbi Ben Isaacson had a quick, un-nuanced reply. "Look," he spat. "You're an apologist for the racists, and I don't have to argue with you here. I know plenty enough like you at home." □

Russell Miller is a New York-based freelance writer.



EDITORIAL



NOT GUILTY BY REASON OF AMNESIA — CASE DISMISSED!

It's Reagan's policies, not his attention span, that count

Ronald Reagan's "I made a mistake" speech was a serious attempt to rescue his administration from the crisis of Reaganate. But it was woefully inadequate, as almost any speech would have been, because the "mistakes" were of policy and the policies were those closest to the president's heart and central to his attention. The administration's problem was not mistakes of inattention or excessive zeal, but of the conservative agenda and of Reagan-style conservatives' contempt for the wishes of the American people. Reagan could not apologize for that and remain viable. So he didn't apologize.

But changes have been made, dramatically, with the appointment of Howard Baker as White House Chief of Staff and of William Webster as head of the CIA. When Sen. Edward M. Kennedy can say that the new chief of staff is "one of the ablest and most sensible leaders in the Republican Party," and Senate Majority Whip Alan Cranston can call Baker "one of my favorite Republicans," things really are different.

Some of the most conservative ideologues are gone, with others at

lower staff levels to follow. Reagan remains in place, as does Attorney General Edwin Meese, but Reagan-style conservatism is no longer in control. The power of the New Conservatives, never firmly established, is now a thing of the past.

We are, of course, grateful for that. But it's far too soon to start rejoicing, for Reaganism was in many ways simply a logical—some might say absurd—extension of the principles of Cold War liberalism as practiced by Jimmy Carter and his predecessors. And while the pendulum is swinging back toward the left now, there are still precious few in public life—and none in the mainstream as represented by Howard Baker—challenging those principles. But Reagan's failure has made clear the dead-end path of Cold War liberalism and its right-wing extension, and in doing so it has provided a chance to examine the post-World War II premises of American foreign and domestic policy. We now have a window of opportunity. It should be kept open.

Governors' welfare plan includes a forward step

Two weeks ago, the National Governors' Association devoted virtually its entire annual midwinter meeting to welfare reform, assuring that the issue will be on Congress' 1987 agenda. With one dissenting vote—by Wisconsin's new Republican governor Tommy G. Thompson—the governors approved a far-reaching two-part plan. It calls for a mandatory education and training program for able-bodied welfare recipients, and it calls for government aid for any family whose income falls below a set standard—approximately the current official poverty level.

The governors' plan envisions that every "employable" welfare recipient—those able-bodied and without children under the age of three—would sign a binding contract under which the recipient would agree to "strive for self-sufficiency," either by completing an education or training program or by beginning a job search. The government, in turn, would provide not only training and job-search assistance, but also adequate child care and medical insurance to enable individuals to make the welfare-to-work transition.

The income support program, based on the cost of providing food, shelter, clothing, health care and other essentials, would be based on a federal formula adjusted for regional variations. It would replace the current Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), which is said to discourage family formation because it provides benefits in most cases only to single-parent families and the unemployed, with a new system that would aim to ensure that all families receive poverty-level incomes—that they enjoy a "minimum living standard." This would include poor two-parent families in which someone works full time—families not now eligible for welfare assistance.

President Reagan has endorsed the idea of a mandatory education and training program, but not income support, and leaders in both the House and Senate have indicated support for action of some kind. Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-NY) and Rep. Harold E. Ford (D-TN), chairmen of the subcommittees with primary jurisdiction over welfare, plan to work with a task force of governors to develop a single, comprehensive bill. And in the House, Reps. Barbara B. Kennelly (D-CT) and Robert T. Masui (D-CA) have introduced a bill (HR 1255) that closely mirrors the National Governors' Association proposal. It now seems likely that something approximating the governors' plan will pass Congress this session, and that it has a reasonable chance of gaining a presidential signature, given the change in White House staff and Reagan's weakened position.

Of the two parts in the governors' plan, income support is the more beneficial, in that it is based on the principle that any indi-

vidual or family involuntarily poor should receive government assistance. This eliminates the undesirable features of AFDC, which in many cases forces poor women into perpetual dependency on the program—because they must live alone to receive aid. But this is also the part of the plan that will receive the greatest opposition in Congress and from the administration, because it will cost more money and it is not framed as a seek-work program. If enacted, however, it would allow greater freedom from the degrading requirements of AFDC and it would bring many individuals and families closer to a minimal standard of living.

We discussed the fallacy underlying the mandatory education and training program in an editorial in the previous issue (Feb. 25). Our objection is not to the requirement of education, job training or looking for work, but to the illusion that any of those will make a difference in the number of those unemployed and needing assistance. Indeed, the main reason education and training are needed to make people "employable" is that these people have correctly perceived that going to school and learning is unlikely to lead to a decent job, much less a satisfactory career at anything more than poverty level wages. That's part of what causes so many poor blacks and Hispanics to drop out of school in the first place, and neither they nor poor whites are likely to participate in education and training programs any more enthusiastically under the proposed plans unless the prospects for employment in decent jobs at decent wages are brighter in the future. And even if they do participate eagerly in such programs, they are doomed to disillusionment and further demoralization if, at the end, they are qualified for jobs that don't exist.

The problem is that the private sector is unable to provide anything close to full employment. In fact, increasing numbers of the new jobs in service industries are at or near poverty levels and the prospects of escaping poverty through such jobs are increasingly remote.

Within the current framework of reliance on private capital to provide employment there are some things that might be done to help the working poor. Raising the minimum wage substantially is one. Cutting the normal workweek from 40 to 30 hours is another—though the additional jobs created by such a move would be fewer and probably shorter-lived than some might expect. But no matter what is done in the nature of marginal adjustments, the problem of unemployment and poverty—and, therefore, welfare—will continue to plague our society until we face the need for massive government intervention in the economy and all that implies about our social priorities.

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LETTERS

Trash

AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER FOR THE CITY of Jersey City specializing in solid waste management I was pleased to read Richard Asinof's "Garbage-bag Earth" (ITT, Feb. 17). The landfill we use is supposed to close in a year. Our county is planning an incinerator in the next town.

Although one of my jobs is pressuring the county to build and operate the best incinerator possible, I will never be successful without the groups opposing incineration. In fact, in just a few years, popular agitation has forced the industry significantly to improve air pollution control. (As Asinof suggests, ash disposal remains its Achilles' heel.)

While it may be necessary in an introductory article to draw the battle lines between greedy corporations and victimized citizens, I wish that Asinof had not waited until the last column to ask the toughest question—what is the alternative to burying and burning garbage?

Incinerator-builders, not recyclers, have gained the lion's share of governmental subsidies. But short of changing the way our economy creates artificial needs from natural resources, we will always have more than enough trash. The best we can expect from capitalism is Japan, which recycles half its waste and burns/buries the rest. (For a fuller treatment of recycling, read Barbara Goldofar's upcoming article in *Technology Review*.)

Carl Blumenthal
Jersey City, N.J.

Free speech and the CIA

DARIA H. STEIGMAN ARGUES (ITT, FEB. 18) THAT protest of CIA recruiting on campuses blocked "free speech." So has virtually every administration and, of course, so does the CIA.

But using free speech and the CIA in the same breath is like calling for an affirmative action program in the Mafia. The CIA has a 40-year history of assassinating political opponents and, at times, as in the Phoenix Project in Vietnam, even assassinating friends. It is a secret organization whose undemocratic and illegal acts are often not known until years later. It also, by the way, is fond of censoring books, especially critiques by ex-agents.

Steigman confuses recruiting for the CIA with recruiting for other corporations and with preventing CIA representatives from engaging in open discussion or debate, something they are inclined to back away from. With public corporations, the recruiter's job description is a rough approximation of what the recruitee can expect if hired. One can see roughly what Ford does, how it spends its money, how it's organized. This is not the case with the CIA. I've read several CIA ads in campus newspapers, no mention of assassinations, overthrowing neutral governments, bribing union officials and editors, of domestic spying, hiring mercenary armies, mining harbors, of covert action programs in direct conflict with the government's stated public policy. In other words, the recruiter tells a romantic story of overseas opportunities that is an extension of the CIA's chief specialty:

"misinformation."

The analogy to the Mafia is not as far-fetched as most Americans might think. CIA-Mafia connections in heroin-running during the Vietnam war are well-documented, and where exactly is the contra-cocaine coming to Miami via Southern Air (read CIA flight) going? Our April 6 trial will demonstrate that the CIA has broken several U.S., international and Massachusetts laws. If the jury finds us innocent of trespassing it can only be because the CIA is guilty of more serious crimes. This and other similar necessity defense trials introduce free speech by allowing the debate about the real CIA to take place.

Abbie Hoffman
CIA on Trial Project
Amherst, Mass.

Synch or swim

BILL PETERSON'S TIRADE AGAINST THE AMERICA'S Cup race (ITT, Feb. 18) was long on iambic invective but it fell short of the real reason why the *Stars and Stripes* emerged victorious. It's undeniable that corporate fat cats sacrificed millions of dollars to the new Jehovah of winged keel technology. But that just evened the odds. The four-zip outcome was a result of Dennis Conner's burning obsession to save face—a seafaring singleness of purpose not witnessed since the heyday of Captain Ahab.

For the last couple of years Conner and his merry little band of volunteer automations adhered to a training regimen that would have made a Spartan blush. For Conner, victory down under was a self-imposed mandate; that's why he relentlessly drove his men to the edge of racing perfection—absolute teamwork. It was said that by race time, members of the crew were so in synch with Conner that he could telegraph his orders to them without speaking. The event had become a crusade and the crew that proved itself to be the master race would assuredly be master of the race.

Sure, money played a part in the victory, but in the end it was a triumph of the will, not the wampum.

Tom Johnson
Brooklyn, N.Y.

The South will rise again

IT WAS GOOD TO SEE THE PHOTO AND (ALL-TOO-brief) account of the peace demonstration at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station (ITT, Jan. 28). But I would have liked more detailed coverage of what proved to be the largest assembly of peace activists ever held in the South and the first ever to gather at Cape Canaveral. Among the 198 people arrested in actions protesting the test

launch of the Trident II were Dr. Benjamin Spock and his wife, Mary Morgan. People came from all over Florida. Many had marched the 200 miles from Kings Bay, Ga., where the Trident nuclear submarine is based, reaching out to people in each town all along the way.

Esther Nighbert
Gainesville, Fla.

Black misleaders

SOME ITT READERS (LETTERS, FEB. 11) CLAIM I'M racist for saying (ITT, Jan. 21) that New York black leaders handled the Howard Beach case destructively. It's condescending to blacks and demeaning to the left not to make the criticisms I did.

Black leaders backed attorney Alton Maddox's demand that Gov. Mario Cuomo name a special prosecutor because Queens D.A. John Santucci was "covering up" the truth. They claimed that: Dominick Blum, whose car hit Michael Griffith, was an accomplice of the assailants but was "coddled" because his own father is a cop; that cops treated assault victim Cedric Sandiford more like a suspect and discounted his version of events; and that D.A. Santucci was derelict, as now proven by special prosecutor Charles Hynes' murder indictments of three whites.

These sleazy distortions prove the folly of moral posturing that cares little for people or facts.

Blum is an integrationist who had just dropped a black friend off from a play they'd seen before he hit Griffith. Blum drove home, but after talking with that cop father of his, he returned. Cops may have coddled Blum, but those who return to an accident are seldom charged with leaving. Blum represents fair-minded New Yorkers whom a movement for racial justice should embrace.

A black weekly complained that "the D.A.'s office and police were trying to convince Sandiford that his version of the mob attack...was incorrect." It was. Special prosecutor Hynes says Sandiford's tale had to be scrapped to get the murder indictments. This doesn't excuse police mistreatment of him, but to ignore his own untruths while charging a cover-up at his expense suggests a taste for moral posturing over truth.

Hynes says the indictments don't prove the D.A.'s malfeasance, noting that the white youth he "turned" had no incentive to speak to Santucci while Sandiford refused cooperation.

Hynes will look into "cover-up" charges, but Cuomo has every political incentive to make Santucci the fall guy for the controversial Hynes appointment, and Santucci has given Cuomo enough mistakes to hide

behind. Let's hope Hynes plays it straight.

The February 16 *National Law Journal* details Maddox's history of fabricating stories deliberately to botch cases in order to show blacks that the criminal justice system doesn't work. He trades in smears, lies, reverse racism and homophobia, leading New York Civil Liberties Union spokesman Richard Emery to say, "I will never work with him again."

Black leaders should apologize to Blum. That would disarm and impress white working New Yorkers who abhor what happened in Howard Beach but get only derision and contempt from black leaders and their white left groupies. Maddox's conduct sends the wrong signal: racially polarized power is the only way forward. We do have a racist criminal justice system, but should whites take Maddox's cold, separatist assumptions to heart, blacks are finished.

Jim Sleeper
Washington, D.C.

All else aside

LIKE MANY OTHER WORKING, COMMITTED INDIVIDUALS, I seldom have time to write letters to the editor—unfortunately, the cumulative effect of that is that most voices of agreement are unraised, while those in disagreement and opposition make themselves heard with a vengeance. I thought Diana Johnstone's Perspective "The Denial of Mideast Reality Hurts Israel" (ITT, Dec. 17, 1986) was superb, but I did not take the time to write and say so.

Then I read Jeffrey Isaac's outrageous reply (ITT, Feb. 11) and felt compelled to put aside all else and voice my support for Johnstone's courageous, correct and sensitive analysis of Israel, Zionism and the use of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism to serve the political objectives of both.

Thoughtful Israelis including such mainstream individuals as Boaz Evron (see for example "The Holocaust: The Wrong Lessons" in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Spring 1981), a former member of the Stern Group, have been saying things similar to—indeed far stronger than—Johnstone's analysis for years. It is long past time such issues were aired in the U.S. My congratulations to Johnstone—as a Jew, a humanist and a socialist. The few voices like Johnstone, Alexander Cockburn, Noam Chomsky and several others must not be stifled. On no issue is the propaganda system in this country more intense, obfuscating, restrictive and punitive than on the questions of Israel, Zionism and the Palestinians.

Cheryl A. Rubenberg
Associate Professor of Political Science
Florida International University
Author, *Israel and the American National Interest: a Critical Examination*

SYLVIA



the White House
ANNOUNCED today
that the president
PLANS to LEAVE the
OVAL OFFICE before the
end of his TERM...
possibly next week.

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3-19

by Nicole Hollander



"Let's face it. these last
2 YEARS WILL BE A
TOTAL LOSS. the Presi-
dent MIGHT AS WELL
Just blow it OFF," said
AN UNIDENTIFIED
SOURCE.

Nicole Hollander

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Tax reform creates new possibilities for the left

By Lance Compa

LIBERAL AND LEFT-WING CRITICS SPILLED much ink hooting down the tax reform bill of 1986. A near-consensus on the left saw tax overhaul as a grand fraud, nothing more than a dressed up tax cut for the rich. This analysis rested on three main elements of the tax bill: the drastic cut in the top rate of taxation, down from 50 percent to 28 percent on personal incomes and from 46 percent to 34 percent on corporate profits; continued special treatment for the oil, gas, timber and mining industries; and reduction of the two principal working person's tax breaks: Individual Retirement Accounts and the deductibility of consumer interest payments.

Most telling for many was Ronald Reagan's championing of the tax reform. If Reagan was for it, it had to be awful, right?

Wrong. The tax reform bill was an astonishing advance for anyone who cares about putting equity back into the tax system. Though Reagan portrayed it as his bill, he got snookered by career professionals in the Treasury Department and on the staffs of congressional committees. Bureaucrats they may be, but many Treasury technicians and Capitol Hill pros took aim at the loopholes and boondoggles attached to tax legislation over the years. Letting Reagan paint the bill as a tax cut in line with his less-government rhetoric was a tactical move to get it passed.

Tax reform is an issue made for educating and moving people. Now, the left should neither carp about the '86 bill nor consider the issue dead in '87. Last year's reform can be a springboard for completion of the job.

The worst thing about the old tax system was what specialists call the "base"—the source of corporate and personal income subject to taxation, whatever the rates.

Over the past quarter-century, starting with President Kennedy's 10 percent investment credit, the tax base was shredded with loopholes. Changes always came in the name of investment incentives, entrepreneurship, economic growth and the like, as well as grand liberal goals like home ownership, low-income housing and retirement income. Many tax changes amounted to social engineering by liberals trying to attain with tax incentives what they couldn't win with spending programs. But the underlying assumption was old-fashioned trickle-down theory. Most of the changes benefited corporations and wealthy investors in the hope that they would build new plants and create jobs. They did—mostly overseas.

By the mid-'80s the proliferation of tax loopholes drove down the share of federal receipts from the corporate income tax to a little more than 7 percent from nearly one-third three decades earlier. Giant, profitable corporations like General Electric and Boeing paid no taxes, and even got re-

funds.

Investment credits, accelerated depreciation of plant and equipment, safe harbor leasing (letting profitable companies "buy" the tax losses of others, foreign tax credits and deductibility of taxes on foreign profits, write-offs for mergers, acquisitions, ESOPs and leveraged buyouts, tax-free industrial revenue bonds for shopping centers, non-union hotels and runaway plants—these and a host of other boondoggles made a mockery of the corporate income tax. Any company that had to pay the on-paper 46 percent corporate income tax should have fired its lawyers and accountants.

Wealthy investors fared just as well. First was preferential treatment of capital gains. Real estate shelters, livestock shelters and other investments let high earners hide their income from taxation while wage earners paid taxes weekly.

In this context it was impossible to launch a soak-the-rich tax reform movement. You can't soak the rich with Swiss cheese. Eliminating the loopholes and broadening the base were the reformers' chief tasks, and in the '86 tax bill they succeeded. Now we can talk about genuine tax reform.

What was accomplished? Nearly every tax giveaway favoring corporations and investors was corrected in the tax reform bill:

- The 10 percent investment tax credit was eliminated. This was free money for companies; most investments would have been made anyway just to keep business

Eliminating loopholes and broadening the base were the tasks of the '86 bill. Now real tax reform is on the agenda.

going. When they invested for tax advantages, it was to replace workers with machinery when workers were still more productive.

- Accelerated depreciation was replaced by a schedule that more nearly reflects useful life.

- Foreign tax credits and deductions of taxes on foreign profits were largely curtailed, removing an incentive to close plants in the U.S. and go overseas.

- Tax advantages in mergers, acquisitions, leveraged buyouts and other asset paper-shuffling that added billions of dollars of debt but no value to the economy—and indeed forced plant closings and concessionary union contracts on thousands of workers—have been mostly eliminated.

- The ability of states and cities to manipulate industrial revenue bonds to lure runaway shops was checked by limiting tax-free bonds to genuine public purpose projects.

- A loophole that let Pentagon contractors delay tax payments until a project was finished—often indefinitely—was narrowed.

- Letting banks deduct bad loans even while they carried them on their books as assets was changed to make them take deductions only on actual losses.

- Favorable treatment of capital gains was ended, making capital gains tax rates equal to income tax rates.

- "Passive" investment shelters in real es-

tate and other ventures where investors hid income have been curtailed.

- The truck-sized 401(k) loophole that allowed company executives to deduct up to \$30,000 a year in plan contributions was cut back to a \$7,000 cap and limited to plans in which rank and file workers also participate.

- An airtight minimum tax was enacted to tax company profits.

In all, corporations will be paying \$120 billion in new taxes over the next five years, while six million poor and working poor households will pay no taxes. If nothing more were involved, these two provisions validate the reform.

Want more? Personal exemptions and standard deductions, features that benefit low income taxpayers in greater proportion, were raised substantially. Pension vesting was made mandatory upon five years' service with an employer, down from 10—a big break for women workers who tend to stay less time in one job.

Even the curtailment of the IRA deduction (for contributions—interest earned in an IRA is still tax-free), a juicy loophole for almost everyone, means more protection for retirement income in the long run. IRAs were really a stalking horse to destroy Social Security; we are well rid of them.

Low rates: But what about the rates, say tax reform critics—the regressive, almost flat, two-tier bracket structure of 15 percent and 28 percent tax rates on personal income, which will shower millionaires with a huge tax cut? It's a scandal, of course, and it must be reversed. But blasting the '86 tax reform as a fraud will only dishearten citizens for a new push to change the rates. Instead, a campaign that treats the '86 changes as one half of a job worth doing can win a progressive rate system.

Millionaires now pay an average of only 22 percent taxes on their income. With no loopholes, they'll be paying more even with a 28 percent top rate. But that new top rate is still years away.

The 15-28 percent plan is planned for 1988. In 1987 a modestly progressive rate structure is in place: five brackets at 11 percent, 15 percent, 28 percent, 35 percent and 38.5 percent, with break points at incomes of \$3,000, \$28,000, \$45,000 and \$90,000 on joint returns. In 1988 there will be a 33 percent "hump" on income between \$72,000 and \$150,000.

Advocates of a progressive tax system should raise the demand now to hold the '87 rates in place. It would do wonders for the federal deficit—and maybe even allow a look at needed new federal programs, like national health insurance. Against the Reaganite charge of "there they go again, raising taxes," there is a simple response: no one is having taxes raised. We're just holding the modestly progressive '87 rates in place, and they're still a cut from the '86 rates.

Right-wingers are on to this strategy already. They circulated a pledge among House and Senate candidates in the latest elections forswearing a change in the 15-28 percent rate structure. A lot of liberals, fearful of the "big taxer" label, signed on. But with deficit and health care crises looming, they can be made to take another look—if the left can overcome their cynicism about tax reform.

Lance Compa is Washington representative of the United Electrical Workers Union.

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Back in the World

Now let's look at some contradictions of capital in the culture industry.

CBS Evening News with Dan Rather, Nov. 20, 1986 (Bob Schieffer substituting):

Schieffer: In a report coinciding with today's Great American Smokeout, Bowen also recommended that all states ban the sale of tobacco to anyone under 18. The cigarette industry's own code forbids promotion aimed at people under 21. But one group targeted by cigarette manufacturers is the black community, and *CBS News* correspondent Bob Faw has a report on that.

Bob Faw: Black Americans are smoking more than white Americans; and they're getting sicker, from heart disease and cancer.

Dr. Richard Cooper (Cook County Hospital): Lung cancer is now 50 percent higher among black men compared to white men.

Dr. Brian Simmons (Cook County Hospital): Cigarette smoking is causing an awful lot of deaths in the black community.

Faw: But in the inner city the message to light up is overwhelming. The tobacco companies know a market when they see it.

Woman: You can't get away from it. It's all around us.

Man: No. It's no good for the community to have that many billboards around like that, because that's enticed the kids to smoke cigarettes.

Woman (announcing a fashion show): This is the way to stop the traffic on any city street. (Woman at fashion show modeling outfit while smoking a cigarette.)

Faw: The tobacco industry has also carefully cultivated the black market by sponsoring events like this that associate smoking with glamour, and by contributing to black charities.... And in black publications, where roughly 20 percent of advertisements urge readers to smoke, tobacco industry money can mean the difference between staying in business and going under.... When we asked the NAACP to discuss the money it gets from the tobacco industry the NAACP refused. We asked *Essence* magazine. The magazine also said no. The topic, said one of its officials, is just too sensitive. The reluctance of black leaders to criticize the tobacco industry perplexes New York's mayor, who has chastised them in an anti-smoking radio spot.

Mayor Ed Koch: Leaders in the black community ought to be in the vanguard to protect the black community.

One can scarcely blame Faw and his producer, but the logical next stage in this segment would have been a brisk, combative interview with the chairman and chief executive officer of CBS, Lawrence Tisch, who was able to buy controlling stock in CBS from the millions he has made out of selling cigarettes. And when he had finished asking Tisch how he felt as a drug pusher who has killed millions (see page 24), Faw could have gone on to discussions with the publishers of news magazines like *Time* and of periodicals like *The New Republic* about how they feel about the tobacco business. Martin Peretz, millionaire friend of Ivan Bosky and *New Republic* publisher, suppressed an article critical of the tobacco industry on the grounds that it would have driven away tobacco advertising. Finally, Faw could have interviewed the owners of all the networks on the topic of how they feel about the advertisements for arms companies that contribute so powerfully to their balance sheets. The views of the chair-

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

man of General Electric, owner of NBC, would have been particularly interesting in this regard.

Charlotte's Web and the Temple of Doom

Contra-gate is centrally about secret government and since a lot of secret governing has been going on in the past six years, the scandal will not go away in a hurry. Among the recent revelations is the news, unsurprising to those on the left who properly regarded it as a black bag operation from the start, that "Project Democracy"—announced by President Reagan in a speech to the British Parliament in 1982—had a secret dimension. The real Project Democracy was in effect an international terror HQ in the White House, dedicated to counterrevolution and beyond any form of accountability. Amid high-minded protestations that the CIA would not be involved, the White House then set up both the public and secret sides of Project Democracy and imported a CIA officer to run the latter.

If Congress or the special prosecutor's office has the will to probe deeply into the darker regions of Project Democracy some truly grisly stuff—the core material of Reaganism—will surface; but it's remarkable how little attention has been paid even to Project Democracy's public side. The winter issue of the *Resource Center Bulletin* (\$5 each, postpaid, from: Box 4506, Albuquerque, NM 87196) has an extremely useful rundown of the project and the crucial personalities involved.

The origins of Project Democracy go back, beyond the Reagan administration, to efforts in the '70s to reproduce the old CIA conduits—discredited and partially closed off in the late '60s—to international student groups, trade unions, business associations and foundations, which would then be recruited to U.S. policies. Such efforts led to the setting up of the American Political Foundation, which had the traditional mix of big labor (Lane Kirkland, president of AFL-CIO), government representatives of business (William Brock, then international trade secretary, now secretary of labor) and party functionaries in the form of the chairmen of the Democratic and Republican National Committees. In other words, these people represented the permanent, bipartisan Cold War directorate, driven by the traditional ideological motor of the rabid cadres of Social Democrats USA, installed in the international department of the AFL-CIO and other strategic crevices of the Cold War bureaucracy.

Following Reagan's 1982 announcement the APF got \$300,000 from the U.S. Agency of International Development to fund a study that led, a year later, to the setting up of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The major APF characters

switched hats to become directors of NED, which then got congressional approval to get funding from the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) headed by that indefatigable salesman of the American capitalist way, Charles Wick. Eugenia Kemble, who had directed the preliminary APF study, became director of the Free Trade Union Institute, the NED's major grantee.

The final structure is a marvelous flow chart of the mechanisms of Cold War counterinsurgency in action. At the top of the tree is the U.S. Congress, whose vigilant lawmakers appropriated \$18 million for NED in 1984, \$18.5 million in 1985 and \$17.2 million in 1986. These funds were shunted through USIA as part of the overall Project Democracy program and ended up in the war chest of the NED, whose directors included: Jay Van Andel, chairman of the Amway Corporation, former chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and currently on the board of the Center for International Private Enterprise, a major NED grantee—for in the world of Project Democracy, the left hand knows exactly what the right hand is doing and what the former giveth, the latter gratefully taketh away; Carl Gershman, executive director of NED, former executive director of Social Democrats USA, former chief assistant to Jeane Kirkpatrick in her sojourn at the U.N. and former scholar in residence at Freedom House; Orrin Hatch, the vehemently anti-labor senator from Utah; Lane Kirkland, director of the AFL-CIO, on the boards of the Rockefeller Foundation, the Free Trade Union Institute (FTUI) and the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD); Walter Mondale, who issued a passionate defense of Project Democracy in the February 23 *New York Times*; and John Richardson, previously president of Radio Free Europe and also a director of Freedom House.

Fanning out from the NED, either partially or wholly funded therefrom, were such outfits as the Free Trade Union Institute, a branch of the AFL-CIO that got \$35 million in 1984 and 1985 to support "free" (i.e., pro-U.S.) trade unions, and which in turn pushes money through to the AIFLD, which also receives funding from the CIA and helps keep unions in El Salvador and elsewhere in Latin America firmly in line. FTUI funds also go to the AIFLD's Asian and African cousins, the Asian-American Free Labor Institute and the African-American Labor Center. Other groups getting money include PRODEMCA, the pro-contra lobbying outfit that includes among its directors J. Peter Grace; Jeane Kirkpatrick; Bayard Rustin, chairman of Freedom House and Social Democrats USA; and Penn Kemble, who is Eugenia Kemble's brother. Kemble is also a bigwig in Social Democrats USA and in a right-wing lobbying group within the Democratic Party, the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, of

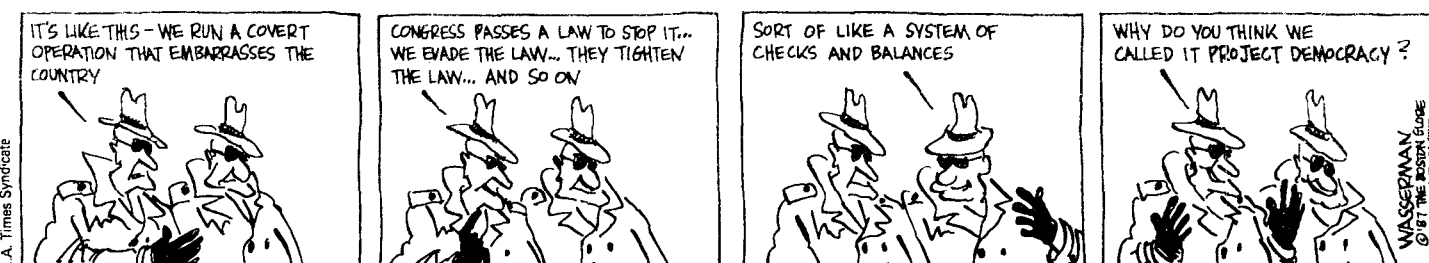
which Ben Wattenberg is a leading light. Kemble was until recently a director of the Institute for Religion and Democracy, whose ideological-political task has been the policing and smearing of progressive trends in the churches.

Also on PRODEMCA's board is William Simon, an important figure in right-wing groups and leader of the self-appointed Lay Commission on the Economy, established to discredit the progressive pastoral letter on the economy put out by the U.S. Catholic bishops last year. Money from the NED has gone through PRODEMCA to the U.S.-backed anti-Sandinista Nicaraguan newspaper *La Prensa* (\$100,000) and to the virulently anti-Sandinista Nicaraguan Permanent Commission on Human Rights, which has routinely ignored contra abuses and whose questionable research formed the basis of the International League for Human Rights' anti-Sandinista report issued here last year.

Cheek by jowl with these organizations are various clients of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Also receiving funds to foster "democratic political ideas and forces" were far-right groups in France.

Thus, Project Democracy was entirely in line with fundamental U.S. bipartisan Cold War strategy and tactics in the postwar period: an alliance of business and labor with crucial functionaries from the clogged sewers of decayed Trotskyism in the Schachtmanite genre. With considerable prescience, the *Resource Center Bulletin* added, "Originally, the NSC discussed a 'public diplomacy program' with four components: information dissemination, political support, covert action and the creation of a quasi-government institute. One document under discussion by the NSC in 1983 advocated covert action on a broader scale, as well as expanded overt political action. That document was offered by Mark Palmer, the same State Department official who wrote Reagan's initial Project Democracy speech. Lt. Col. Oliver North, in addition to his work with the White House's public liaison office, was entrusted with the oversight of the State Department's Office of Public Diplomacy. If North can be considered an example, the line separating covert and overt operations has not been very distinct. Indeed, it seems that overt activities such as those sponsored by NED have been considered complementary pieces in a wider strategy of low-intensity conflict, operations like "Democracy Building" apparently serving as an adjunct to covert operations such as passing arms to "freedom fighters."

In other words, the genius of the Reagan administration was to reconstitute and expand all the traditional components of the Cold War struggle as enacted from 1945 on, from the AFL-CIO to the death squads to the World Anti-Communist League (taken over by the Reagan administration and headed up by Gen. Singlaub), all in a private-public funding mix that entirely evaded any form of accountability. A coup d'etat in Washington is thus the heart of contra-gate.





Amerika's afterword: a TV state of mind

By Jeremiah Creedon

WORD REACHED ME RATHER late that Ted Koppel and ABC were staging the final chapter of their miniseries *Amerika* in my own hometown. I'm talking about Koppel's *Viewpoint* program, which aired live from an auditorium on the University of Minnesota campus here a night after the actual drama had ended. It seemed that every journalist in the Twin Cities was invited to both the show and an earlier party (where Ted dedicated the local journalism school's new Silha Center for Media Ethics and Law). I, however, was not.

That morning I called ABC's field office to report the oversight. I assumed naively that someone in Ted's harem of associate producers would slip me on the guest list. I explained how the juncture of media ethics and Ted and the issues raised by *Amerika* resonated with ironic possibilities. The line went dead as the young woman helping me apparently stopped to consider them. "Forgive me for not knowing," she said finally, "but what sort of paper is it exactly that you're writing for?"

"Socialist," I said.

"I'm sorry," she said quickly, "we're absolutely out of tickets. There's just no room! I suggest you watch our show on television and write about it that way."

Conceptual protests: Minutes before showtime I panhandled a ticket on the auditorium steps. The woman who gave it to me worked for the state League of Rural Voters,

one of three or four small groups that had shown up to criticize the miniseries. The league's flyer argued that a farm crisis already existed in this country, so why blame it as *Amerika* did on an imaginary Soviet invasion? Someone else's leaflet warned that *Amerika* was meant to prepare us for a war in defense of "non-union Coors Beer, Life Insurance and Jello." Two people wandered about wearing cardboard televisions on their heads—art students, I figured, disgruntled with the medium as a concept.

I stood in the cold long enough to express a vague solidarity and then hurried inside to hobnob with my colleagues. I was shocked to find a crowd dressed for the opera. There were also more than a few empty seats, and I was suddenly angry—at myself, for not asking a date along like most everyone else. It was dawning on me that the debate over *Amerika* was just an excuse to go out on the town. No one had watched much of the show anyway. The real allure was to see Ted and perhaps to ask an inane question if civic concern (or a big ego) so compelled you.

The alpha male himself was sitting onstage behind a long low desk. With Ted were Donald Wrye, who wrote and directed *Amerika*, and Brandon Stoddard, ABC's entertainment chief. The others were only present as images via hookups to Washington, Moscow and so forth. They included Ted Turner of Turner Broadcasting; Jeane Kirkpatrick, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; Theodore Sorensen, a former JFK man

serving as the U.N.'s lawyer; and Gennadi Gerasimov, a spokesman for the Soviet foreign ministry.

The bank of video monitors on which we could see them reminded me of the set from *Hollywood Squares*.

Walking on air: "Ten seconds," someone said. We were all cringing beneath the brilliant lights that had been thrown on to illuminate us. I noticed that a roving cameraman who was kneeling beside me in the aisle had broken into a sweat. His job was to pan for crowd reaction. Several staff women (the harem) were moving around with the prim self-possession of flight attendants. Their job was to select those questioners who best represented the

Our problem in addressing the story went beyond the fact that no one had seen it. I saw that most people didn't know what fiction was.

nation's great diversity. They seemed to be saying with body language that going on the air was just another facet of their routinely exciting lives, not the thrill of a lifetime I was feeling as a member of the masses.

The next 90 minutes were a mess. The token Russian kept hearing the echo of his own voice, and Jeane Kirkpatrick's opinion could only be appreciated by a small elite—

perhaps nothing new, except in this case her following was further reduced to those who could read lips. Technical matters aside, content was a problem as well. The debate took on the dreaded quality of those classes in school when it was obvious to all except the teacher that no one had read the assignment. Discussion was reduced to the exchange of generalities between those who least feared revealing how little they knew.

Afterward, I talked to several people who were concerned that the nation would think less of Minnesota now, having seen the sort of individuals who were chosen to speak for us. I assured them otherwise but quickly fell silent. It was like that moment when you first see a friend's bad haircut—easy to say you like it, but very difficult to explain why.

My second reaction was to blame the harem. They, after all, were culling through the questions and deciding which people would be allowed to approach the microphones. Watching them was to see what those observers of power like Shakespeare and Hugh Sidey were always talking about. Ted's view of reality, like King Lear's or Ronald Reagan's, could be altered on a given night by the way his underlings presented it to him. When they fared poorly, so did he.

My third reaction was to assault the medium as a concept, which the art students outside had shown me meant simply holding a glass up to its own image. A live "discussion" like *Viewpoint* could never rise above its initially ridiculous premise: that such a spectacle might

foster the lively and equitable exchange of ideas. Those intrepid or foolish enough to challenge the experts, with their credentials and forensic advantage, were doomed to be crushed like peasants pitting shovels against tanks.

Beyond ignorance: The image of a futile grassroots revolt leads us finally to consider *Amerika* itself. Our problem in addressing the story went beyond the fact that no one had seen it. I realized while listening to the debate that most Americans didn't know what fiction was, let alone how to talk about it. Even if someone had a point to make about the show, no common terms existed for doing so. Fact was fact, but fiction varied in its meaning from superfluous fantasy to heinous lie. Few granted the word its more positive connotations.

We're dealing here with a deep cultural prejudice against the imagination. I once asked Minnesota's Republican Sen. Rudy Boschwitz whether he ever read novels; he more or less told me that life was too short, and I sensed he viewed the genre with profound distrust. He was, however, reading a biography of Lyndon Johnson, or at least planning to—which as his constituent gave me a sense of security I would not have felt had he been lost in *Moby Dick* or *Tolstoy* or *Lord Jim*.

Some would like to believe this genteel illiteracy is limited to the New Right, but it just isn't so. Our exposure to fiction is now largely through television and film, both of which radically alter the nature of fictional characters—and thus the way we address them. The old literary idea that fiction is among other things a way to understand atypical beings (or typical beings in atypical situations) is rejected by the mass media and its mass audience. Every character becomes a composite of a special interest or demographic block, and we worry how their reception at large will affect our lives. An example is *The Color Purple*, which as a movie was debated for its negative portrayal of black men. Transposing the work to film destroyed the intimate experience offered by the book, and along with it went the sense of the reader's generosity that is crucial to completing a fiction.

The sad result, as we saw on *Viewpoint*, was our inability to engage in a civilizing sort of play.

The monologue is a distrusted genre as well, and by now I was quite alone on the auditorium steps. Below me on the plaza was a broken television cracked in half like a big egg. I suddenly remembered how my mother spent years telling me to "get a job in TV." And the funny thing was for the first time ever I had this crazy notion that maybe she was right. ■

Jeremiah Creedon is a Minneapolis-based freelance writer.

Your Native Land, Your Life

By Adrienne Rich
W.W. Norton & Company,
113 pp, \$6.95

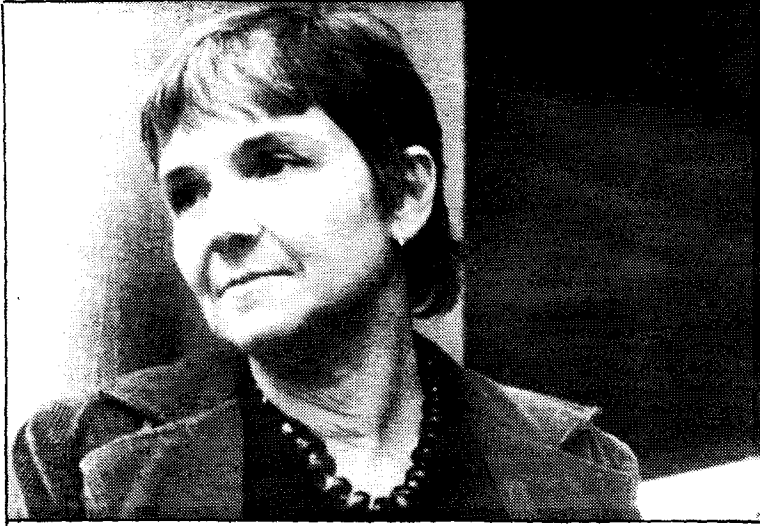
By Maggie Garb

ADRIENNE RICH, REBELLIOUS woman, lesbian activist, distinguished poet, has reached middle age. In a mid-life crisis peculiar to a lesbian poet, Rich has begun to reckon with her past—the politics, culture and education that created her—and to rename and redefine herself in the present. This act is celebrated, examined and anguished over in Rich's most recent collection of poems, *Your Native Land, Your Life*.

Because Rich's poetry is so apparently social and opinionated it is tempting to review its arguments, to applaud the poet's courageous defiance of what have been the acceptable and expected activities for women and for artists. But such a review would be necessarily incomplete. For Rich, politics, poetry and personal life are forever intertwined. To speak of one and not the others is to misstate the facts.

In this, her 12th collection of poems, Rich has attempted to pull together the many strands of her life, to reshape the personalities, places and inner forces that have affected her. The poet becomes one of her favorite, and often repeated, metaphors: the hands of a woman "turning in her lap" absently braiding "bits of yarn, calico and velvet scraps."

The book is divided into three parts: "Sources," "North American Time" and "Contradictions: Tracking Poems." In them Rich explores her struggle in coming to terms with her roots and the ongoing process of becoming in the life of a white North American woman. The



Adrienne Rich: weaving together the many strands of art and life.

Life's Rich pageant through middle age

language here is more sparse and the poems more concise than some of Rich's earlier works, as if she has eliminated the extraneous emotions and words in an effort to expose only the dark undercurrents of her life. There is little melody, only the spoken word or the searching mind, as in the third section of "Sources," where she looks into her childhood for the origins of her power.

*From where? the voice asks coldly.
This is the voice in cold morning
air*

*that pierces dreams. From where
does your strength come?*

Old things...

*From where does your
strength come, you Southern
Jew?*

split at the root, raised in a
castle of air?

The images, and certainly the questions, are stark, almost frightening.

But at times, like a woman who is often lost in the vague messages of memory, Rich seems to lose her concentration and lapse into saccharine sentimentality. While these poems are welcome relief in the book's stark atmosphere, they are weaker and less finely honed; but, as she explains, the concrete images don't always tell the whole story:

*the body's pain and the pain on
the streets*

*are not the same but you can
learn*

*from the edges that blur O you
who love clear edges*

more than anything watch the

edges that blur.

With *Your Native Land, Your Life* we confront a woman who has returned to her sources, who has studied her progress from then to now. She begins to understand her confused Southern childhood. Then she moves on to recognize herself as the frustrated '50s wife, mother and polite imitator of Auden and Yeats. Her life and work, which have always been intimately

LITERATURE

linked, progressed from young widow to disenchanted formalist through spiritual convalescence to feminist leader, lesbian and the voice of a new, powerful, womanly language. As Rich has often said, throughout her many changes she has always been primarily a poet.

And while the passage of time and the lifeline of change may seem a linear progression, Rich has discovered the circular rhythm in these events. *Your Native Land, Your Life* presents the thoughts of a woman in her 58th year, yet it is also a response to the younger woman Rich once was. In one of her first published poems, a description of her feelings about being young entitled "The Middle-aged" and written in 1955, Rich wrote:

They were so kind,

*Would have given us anything; the
bowl of fruit*

*Was filled for us, there was a room
upstairs*

*We must call ours: but twenty
years of living*

They could not give.

Your Native Land, Your Life presents a woman who now possesses those 20 years, and can see her struggle with remarkable clarity.

This book also offers proof that change is never complete and rev-

olution is never a full break with the past, but demands recognizing and coming to terms with an entire heritage. Throughout the book's first section, Rich travels through the places and emotions of her childhood and the early years of her marriage. The eldest daughter of a Jewish father and a Protestant mother, she begins to challenge and ultimately understand her father's desire for assimilation, her mother's striving for propriety and her husband's loneliness.

"Split at the root," she defines herself, continuing "white-skinned social christian/ neither gentile nor Jew/ through the immense silence/ of the Holocaust/ I had no idea of what I had been spared." In poems that seem like sections stolen from a diary she speaks directly to her father and her husband, describing her anger and confusion over what they had said and what they stood for. But she concludes with sympathy:

*I think you thought there was no
place for you, and perhaps there
was none then, and perhaps there
is none now; but we will have to
make it, we who want an end to
suffering, who want to change the
laws of history, if we are not to give
ourselves away.*

Rich has always been a poet struggling to find a place for herself, to find a language devoid of patriarchal domination and heterosexual assumptions. Sometimes her language swells with such political fervor that didacticism obstructs artistic integrity, but Rich's "search for a common language" has not been in vain. As anyone who has followed her work from its formalist beginnings knows, Rich has found a voice that is vulnerable, honest and speaks to the inner turmoil of being a woman, a lesbian and an outsider. ■

A poet's prose: not prosaic

Blood, Bread, and Poetry

By Adrienne Rich
W.W. Norton & Company,
238 pp., \$7.95

By Maggie Garb

BECAUSE POETRY CAN BE SO dense and abstruse you often feel like you have discovered a hot gossip magazine when you open a book of prose by a favorite poet. But Adrienne Rich's most recent collection of prose, *Blood, Bread, and Poetry*, contains few surprises. Her poems are so honest and accessible that they need little explanation. Rich is an eloquent writer and a profound intellect; her prose serves as an expansion of previously stated ideas and includes a type of spiritual autobiography of a woman who is constantly questioning her politics, beliefs and society.

Blood, Bread, and Poetry is a

selection of lectures and articles written from 1979 to 1985 and, as Rich says in the foreword, "a timeline of [her] travels since 1978." The lectures, mainly addressed to college women, have a conversational tone. The dense essays are more informative, with lengthy footnotes and references to the people and publications that have influenced Rich's thought. Both essays and lectures serve as clear statements of Rich's politics, and all are thought-provoking.

Throughout the book Rich is constantly defining and redefining herself and, as always, searching for new language to clarify her issues. Whether examining compulsory heterosexuality, racism in the women's movement, the erasure of women's history or feminist criticism, Rich is explaining herself. She approaches each phenomenon from a position of overt self-consciousness, attempting to acknowledge who and where she is

as she examines her society. As she says, "My essay is founded on the belief that we all think from within the limits of certain solipsisms—usually linked with privilege, racial, cultural and economic as well as sexual—which present themselves as 'universal,' 'the ways things are,' 'all women,' etc., etc. I wrote it equally out of the belief that in becoming conscious of our solipsisms we have certain kinds of choices, that we can and must re-educate ourselves." She identifies herself—a white, Jewish, North American lesbian feminist—over and over as if to remind us that no idea is objective, no individual life separate from work, politics or culture.

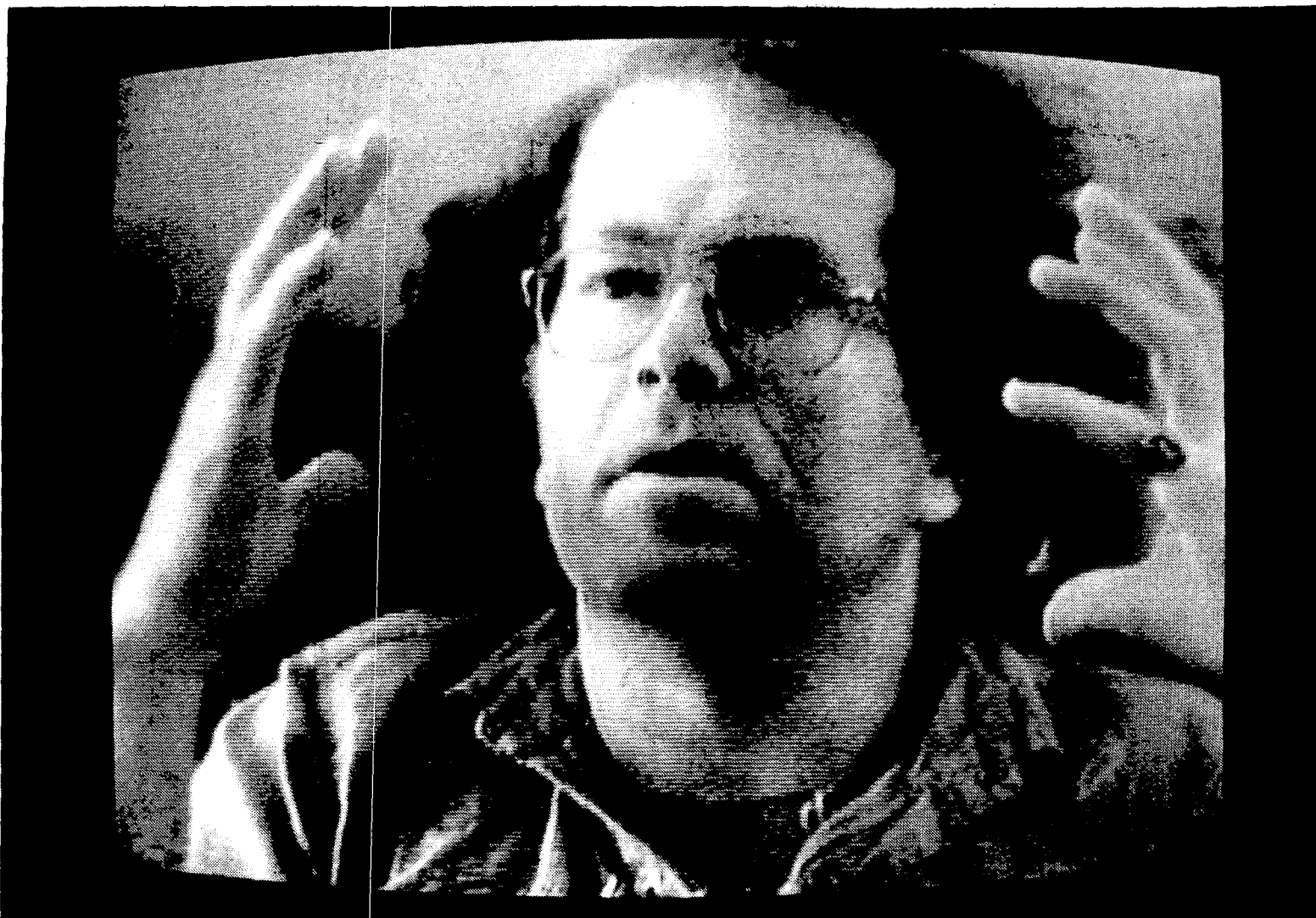
This is obviously what Rich is calling for in feminist criticism, that the writer have the courage to write in a highly personal tone, always recognizing who she is and her cultural limitations. As Rich says, the feminist critic "has a responsibility

not to read, think, write and act as if all women had the same privileges, or to assume that privilege confers some kind of special vision. She has a responsibility to be as clear as possible about the compromises she makes, about her own fear and trembling as she sits down to write; to admit her limitations when she picks up work by women who write from a very different culture and source, to admit to feelings of confusion and being out of her depth."

Among the central themes, and probably the most disturbing question, running throughout the 15 essays in this book is the issue of free choice. As Rich speaks of education, sexuality, history, government, geography, the recurrent questions are, did we choose any of these for ourselves? How limited were our choices? In the provocative essay "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," Rich argues that heterosexuality is a "political institution which disempowers women," and that heterosexuality is a choice that is never free, but always easy.

She does not condemn heterosexual relationships, but states, "Within the institution [of heterosexuality] exist, of course, qualitative differences of experience; but the absence of choice remains the great unacknowledged reality, and in the absence of choice, women will remain dependent upon the chance or luck of particular relationships and will have no collective power to determine the meaning and place of sexuality in their lives."

Choice is again the theme of "Resisting Amnesia," a lecture about the lack of a history that includes women, or the distortion of the role of women in history. The choice here is of becoming "consciously historical" or allowing ourselves to rest in the comfort of nostalgia and the ease of accessible mainstream history. She argues that stories in history books see "only certain kinds of human lives as valuable, as deserving of a history at all." And she challenges us to choose, to search out the rest of the story, to recover that which has been lost or erased. ■



Frank: A Vietnam Vet, Fred Simon's moving video portrait, proves that a talking head can be riveting—it all depends on what is being said, and how.

Tuning in what makes art

By Karen Rosenberg

WHAT IS VIDEO ART ANYWAY? If we mean videotapes by artists (painters, sculptors, performance artists and the like), we could say "artists' video." The term "video art" was apparently coined to describe the product: but on tape, it isn't the news, a sitcom or a talk show. It isn't TV; it's art.

That looks like an answer, until you watch some of what goes under the name "video art." Then you see how close some tapes are to *Saturday Night Live* sketches, or to MTV. As Joyce Bolinger, executive director of Chicago's Center for New Television, observes, independent videomakers have served as the underfunded and generally unacknowledged R&D branch of the commercial television industry. Music videos borrow heavily from experimental video, and that's just the most obvious example.

The producers of *Saturday Night Live* were familiar with the New York surrealist comedy scene, notes David Ross, director of the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. Gary Weiss, whose vignettes were often aired on *Saturday Night Live*, lived next door to William Wegman, whose comic video art features his dog, Man Ray. And Wegman's videos have also played on *Saturday Night Live*.

Who can draw the line dividing art from commerce? The word "art" (as in "video art") should probably be taken as a value judgment: if I say "art," I like it; if I say "television," I don't.

Of course, commercial enterprises have a long history of serving up a watered-down version of the avant-garde to novelty-hungry consumers. Meanwhile, artists in the "post-modern" era parody commercial culture; museums mimic the hype of advertising; and video art—shown not just on public access channels but on public television networks—is pushed toward "broadcast quality" glossiness.

"The idea has taken hold that one can no longer make a 'good tape' without using certain broadcast flourishes—computer editing, slow motion, digital effects, etc.—that have come to represent state-of-the-art video," wrote Lucinda Furlong in *The Independent*, published by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers in New York. "The next step is to produce tapes that are virtually indistinguishable from television."

Playing after hours: In fact, some videomakers are working in production houses that specialize in TV ads in order to play with millions of dollars worth of equipment after 5:00 p.m. It's hard for independent video artists to keep up with the cutting edge—and it's ques-

tionable whether many of them should.

"If you are one or two steps behind state-of-the-art technology, you can produce a tape much cheaper, and hardly anyone can see the difference," says Fred Simon, executive producer of Newton Television Foundation in Massachusetts.

When the novelty of special effects has worn off (and perhaps it already has), audiences, artists and critics may be ready to look for technology used for a purpose. Which leads to the next problem: evaluation. What are the criteria for judging a tape? Current writings on video art fail to provide many answers to that question. They are still defending the medium's right to call itself art. Maybe it's time to declare that battle won and address other issues.

For example, what tends to be left out of most discussions of video art is the documentary. Perhaps some critics are blind to the advance planning and editing required to produce a documentary. Perhaps they don't realize that experienced camera operators shoot to edit—that is, with the end product in mind.

Yet most film critics and historians recognize the artistry of documentary filmmakers like Robert Flaherty (*Nanook of the North* and *Man of Aran*) and Basil

Wright (*Night Mail* and *Song of Ceylon*). Some videomakers are following that tradition.

In *Night Mail* (1936), the poetry of W.H. Auden provided the rhythm for a picture of the British postal trains. John McCloskey's *No One Can Remove Us* (1983) concerns a different type of locomotion: when the only national Indian trade school was going to be closed in

Video Classics: A Guide to Video Art and Documentary Tapes

By Deirdre Boyle
The Oryx Press (2214 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85004), 184 pp., \$20

In this reference book, Boyle has chosen 80 video titles to describe and analyze. Her mini-essays on each are clear and reliable; her enthusiasm never resembles hype. If she leans a bit heavily toward video documentaries (and I think she does) it may be because they are given short shrift in most books on video. I miss more remarks on video artists Eleanor Antin, Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci and Frank Gillette; others will see different gaps. But, given her constraints (only 80 titles), Boyle has produced a helpful and trustworthy guide. Judging from *Video Classics*, one expects her forthcoming history of guerrilla television to be well-researched and eminently readable.

1983, its students recreated a marathon run made more than 300 years ago during the Pueblo revolt against the Spanish.

Carrying petitions to the Native American community, they ran north and west from Albuquerque. The religious intensity of this marathon is underscored by the prose of Native American writer Simon Ortiz, which McCloskey used in his soundtrack. This video was shown before the Congressional Appropriations Committee—and its poetic quality is a major part of its political effectiveness.

Video has often attracted artists who subvert our TV-based conceptions of what a documentary is.

Fred Simon's *Frank: A Vietnam Veteran* (1981) is a moving portrait of one man that proves that a talking head can be riveting—it all depends on what is being said, and how. Simon had four interviews with Frank, sometimes months apart; each time, he and his crew spent nearly five hours lighting the location, so Frank (dressed in the same clothes) would look the same. Then Simon spent about a year editing 16 hours of material down to 52 minutes.

The finished tape has a driving rhythm, as Frank reveals the violent acts he committed in Vietnam and how he feels about them 10 years after his return home. Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art included this portrait in its video exhibition series—an all too rare acknowledgement of the art of the video documentary. As Deirdre Boyle notes in her new book, *Video Classics* (see accompanying story), there is "a certain disdain for non-fiction work as less creative than 'art.'"

And the problem goes even deeper: the "museumization" of video often means the exclusion of political art. The art world is highly polemical, with partisans of formal video experimentation pitted against politically-oriented artists and documentarists. It's often described as a formalist/Marxist opposition, although those labels caricature both camps. This schism has divided American video since the '70s, but conflict has increased as funding has dwindled.

As a result, "what is video art?" is not just an academic question: it is also a matter of who can apply for—and hope to get—which grant. In the Reagan era, the "art-for-art's-sakers" have gained ground; "agit-prop" is unfashionable, and government funding agencies are often suspicious of, if not downright hostile to, anything that suggests *advocacy* (the latest euphemism for leftish ideas).

Politics out the window: In articles and reviews, a history of video art is slowly being written, and politics is being written out. This means, for instance, that critics often talk of artists' hostility to the conventions of commercial television, without mentioning that television may symbolize a consumerist, even capi-

talist, society in these videos.

In *Media Burn* (1975) by a collective called Ant Farm, a 1959 Cadillac smashes through a pyramid of 50 burning TV sets after an actor playing John F. Kennedy has delivered a speech against militarism, monopoly business and the grip of mass media on the flow of information and images. "Television because of its technology and the way it must be used can only produce autocratic political forms, hierarchies and hopeless alienation," says "Kennedy" to a lethargic crowd.

In *Television Delivers People* (1974), video artist Richard Serra has captions like "Popular entertainment is basically propaganda for the status quo" roll down the screen to Muzak. Such works aren't just video about video, but video about the state and the economy.

Even Nam June Paik, crowned king of video for his manipulation of the video image, is more complex and interesting than most of his devotees suggest. From the Fluxus group in West Germany he absorbed the politics as well as the iconoclastic aesthetics of Dada. "Fluxus had more fun, Dada had more social criticism and Dada was more interesting because it had a social [aspect]," he once said. His *Guadalcanal Requiem* (1979) examines a particularly bloody episode in World War II when U.S. Marines captured Japanese airfields on the Solomon Islands. Paik is concerned in this piece with the interaction of cultures and the lasting effects of a historical event. Don't let anyone tell you he's just a technology-obsessed video whiz.

Another product of the Fluxus group, the Japanese-born video artist Shigeko Kubota, uses sophisticated video technology not simply for its own sake, but to heighten emotional effects and suggest how memory colors the past. *Video Girls and Video Songs for Navajo Skies* (1974), a video diary about her stay at a Navajo reservation, plays with color to convey her involvement with her subjects.

"The American Indian culture and its earthbound life style is an integral part of American heritage," Kubota once wrote. "However, Video/TV treatises on this important subject are still in limbo." Feeling, as an Asian, a "prehistoric tie with Indian people," she decided to fill the gap which she perceived. But her video is not primarily informational—it is warm, infused with her friendship for one Navajo family, and ends with her remark, "I am sister-in-law of Navajo people."

If Kubota's piece is recognized as video art, then other documentaries deserve this status. Or we could drop the honorific word "art" and just leave it as "video."

After all, as Fred Simon says, "We don't speak of 'painting art' but painting. If we were to call some works 'painting art,' what would we say about the rest of painting?" ■ Karen Rosenberg has written on video for the *Boston Globe* and the *Wilson Library Bulletin*.

Spirited union of faith and aesthetics in Cuban art

By Lucy R. Lippard

DESPITE CONDITIONED ETHNOCENTRISM, we in the post-industrial countries sense that we have lost something that can still be found in parts of the world we have tried to dominate. Many Third World countries, especially those occupied with a revolutionary search for their own nearly-lost cultural identities, offer fragments of models for the movement for cultural democracy in the U.S., England and Europe. As Cuban art critic Gerardo Mosquera wrote in *Revolución y Cultura* last July, it is necessary for Third World cultures to participate creatively in the formation of evolution of the languages that are shared with the dominant cultures: "We Africans, Asians and Latin Americans must make occidental culture, just as the 'barbarians' made Christianity."

The high energy point of contact between European and Third World cultures lies in a misty and potentially dangerous domain between art and religion—the meeting place where what the art world calls "primitivism" joins mass and popular culture, "kitsch" and the "folkloric." Because of its geopolitical location and the recent development of an innovative modernism "within the revolution," Cuba is a particularly important point of the developing fusion of Afro-European-Latin cultures. The visual element of the Afro-Caribbean religious synthesis was the subject of a full day of the Caribbean Art conference held in the last week of November, concurrent with the Second Havana Bienal (see *In These Times*, Feb. 25), where many of the works showed the influence of *Santería* and other African-inspired traditions.

Presided over by deities that are hybrids of Yoruba Orishas and Catholic saints, *Santería* ("the worship of saints") is a living religion in Cuba today. This African-American faith—which claims 100 million followers in Latin America and perhaps up to five million in the U.S.—began when West African slaves brought their religion to the New World 300 years ago. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it offered spiritual solace to slaves ripped from their homelands. Under the Batista regime and its predecessors, Afro-Cuban religions were marginalized, if no longer banned. But since the 1959 revolution there has been a concerted effort to raise their official status and integrate them into the general culture. This was first implemented through dance and theater. More recently *Santería* has surfaced in the visual arts, providing a classic and com-

plex example of transculturation not only between Africa and the Caribbean, but between different African and Latin ethnic groups in this hemisphere.

Grounded in earth: *Santería* is grounded in earth, trees, leaves, animal spirits, the pure stuff of nature and natural forces. It exerts a powerful attraction to those artists seeking their own roots in a hybrid history. A pioneer in the process was Manuel Mendive, a 42-year-old visionary storyteller in paint, wood, paper and textiles, who does not merely illustrate or reiterate *Santería* parables, but interprets old symbols through the organic and inventive use of traditional imagery. Though there is a so-called

ART

"primitive" element to his paintings, Mendive is no naïf. He graduated from art school and has thoroughly studied Afro-Cuban religion. At the opening of the Bienal, he orchestrated a neo-ritual performance, the remains of which—a rectangular box of dirt and some leaves—became his entry in the show (and won a prize).

When I was last in Cuba, I heard about but couldn't visit the Museo de *Santería*, housed in a lovely colonial mansion in the suburban town of Guanabacoa. This time I got there to see two small Bienal exhibitions of contemporary artists employing *Santería* motifs. The museum itself is a beautifully designed jewel. The contents are the ritual artifacts, beaded and embroidered priestesses' dresses, eerie masked costumes and extraordinary altars and shrines whose counterparts are still used in contemporary ceremonies. Outside in the patio, these are echoed by a working shrine at the base of a huge old tree marked with white geometric Congolese cosmograms. Among the roots are a cowrie-studded mud head, overturned saucers, trails of salt, dried blood, candles, feathers and idols, familiar from Robert Faris Thompson's book *Flash of the Spirit*. Thompson, a white Yale professor, spoke at the conference in fluent Spanish; his work creates an important contemporary bridge between Afro-American and Euro-American cultures. Another recent interaction on this relatively untried ground was the four-month visit last year of three young avant-garde Cuban artists to the State University of New York at Old Westbury. Two of them—Ricardo Rodríguez Brey and Joçé Bedia—are among the leading proponents of modernist (or even postmodernist) uses of Afro-Cuban religion. Their work, and that of many other

younger Cubans, raised some crucial questions about the cross-cultural process, which was strikingly illuminated by the Guanabacoa museum.

The altars and shrines in the museum incorporate without esthetic hesitation an amazing collection of objects ranging from "abstract" iron sculptures dedicated to Ogún, to china ducks, iron kettles, dolls, charms, turtle shells, quilts, plaster dogs, religious chromos and "flowers" of overlapping plates in basins. These altars are in themselves perfect symbols, or illustrations, of the transcultural ambiance in Cuba, and they tend to overwhelm in presence and visual force most of the contemporary art derived from them. Indeed, the objects in the museum exuded a power so strong that it was almost frightening for a non-initiate.

Dissecting the living: At the same time, there was something queasy about the conference's scholars dissecting and hypothesizing Afro-Cuban religion as though most of the black people in Cuba did not still practice it, as though priests who knew the secrets were not still right around the corner. As Lázara Menéndez from the University of Havana pointed out, the syncretic religions are still developing. The lack of theory and institutionalization have produced a flexible creativity in constant flux. Form and content sometimes get out of sync as religious imagery is recreated daily. The *Santería* faithful and adepts can be real artists totally outside of the "high" art context, although artistic values are merely one part of their practice. As the meanings change, gates are opened for artists both within and outside of the faiths.

There are, of course, plenty of contradictions. Some of the young Cuban artists were raised within *Santería*; others have approached it as relative exotica. Artist Rubén Torres Llorca, who has studied *Santería* iconography from a formal viewpoint, says that "its influence comes through in the distribution of elements. For example, things on a Cuban altar are placed in very specific ways, reflecting the occult relations among them. You might see a Chinese vase bought in a store next to a figure of a North American Indian from a Western. It's a motley combination, but with occult relations."

I asked about the secularization of religious meaning, wondering if it did not amount to a kind of blasphemy. But the consensus was that the popularization and incorporation of syncretic religions into Cuban general culture was all to the good, though some wariness

was expressed about the degree to which folkloricization can water down sacred meanings. Rodríguez Brey, who uses salt, plants, leaves and *Santería* symbols in his evocative installations, acknowledged that there are degrees of authenticity and aesthetic distillation. He said that, having been raised close to these beliefs, there were certain aspects that he would not make public in his art. His interest lies in "the conceptual level, in how the rituals were acted out...[which] sometimes leads to confusion."

Erotic creation myths: Maria Magdalena Campos, a dynamic 27-year-old Cuban with her hair in corn rows, combines mythology, eroticism and an atypical Cuban feminism in her work. Her wall-size installation at the Guanabacoa museum consisted of brilliantly painted cut-out shapes recalling in a purely abstract manner some forms in the *Santería* part of the museum. But their meanings referred both to erotic creation myths and to secular contemporary issues of female sexuality. The "labial" central forms are overlaid by a snake-like coil that actually refers to an IUD. The lightning zigzags at the sides can be similarly interpreted as sacred or profane.

The Indians that inhabited Cuba were so thoroughly and so early extinguished, that the African image represent "the indigenous" there, and exerts a particularly strong attraction because of the absence of pre-columbian influence.

Since the Havana Bienal included African art, it was possible to compare it with Afro-Latin form, content and style. For instance, the vigorous crowded canvases of Mozambican Malangatana Newenya and Bruce Onobreakpeye's *Ibioko* (a ghostly gray forest with traditional bronze figures and masks suspended from it) cross African and European cultures within the Latin component. Hervé Télémaque, a Haitian who has lived in Paris since the '50s, had a retrospective show at Casa de las Americas which prefigured the combination of Pop and indigenous motifs that characterize much current Cuban art. And, of course, the classic transcultural figure in Cuban art is the late Wifredo Lam, after whom a major visual arts center is named. Cuban by nationality, Asian and African by descent, Lam lived in France and knew the grandmasters of modernism. Thus, as Armando Hart observed, he "uniquely represented four continents."

All in all, the Havana Bienal and the Caribbean art conference offered a marvelous mulch of popular arts, Afro-American imagery and Western postmodernism. Exposing the bare and vulnerable bones of a whole series of cultural struggles for identity, they projected a vision of aesthetic and political hope hard to come by farther north. ■

Lucy R. Lippard is a New York-based art critic and a regular contributor to *In These Times*.

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Smoking

Continued from page 24

would not tolerate smoke. After six months I had chronic sore throat. I gave up smoking, gladly. Because it was a ritual with my buddies—Murl, Leon and "Dog" Farley—I continued to drink wine.

My father died from "the poor man's friend," pneumonia, one hard winter when his bronchitis and emphysema had left him low. After coughing for so many years I doubt he had much lung left at all. He had so little breath that, during his last years, he was always leaning on something. I remember once at a family reunion when my daughter was two my father picked her up for a minute—long enough for me to photograph them—but the effort was obvious. Near the very end of his life, and largely because he had no more lungs, he quit smoking. He gained a couple of pounds, but by then he was so emaciated no one noticed.

Toxic wastes: When I travel to Third World countries I see many people like my father and daughter. There are large billboards directed at them both. The tough "take charge" or dapper older man; the glamorous, "worldly" young woman puffing away. In these poor countries—as in American ghettos and reservations—money that should be spent for food goes instead to the tobacco companies; over time, people starve themselves of both food and air, effectively weakening and addicting their children, eventually eradicating themselves. I read in the newspaper and in my gardening magazine that cigarette butts are so toxic that if a baby swallows one it is likely to die, and that the water from a bunch of them boiled makes an effective insecticide.

My daughter would like to quit, she says. We both know the statistics are against her; most people who try to quit smoking do not succeed.

There is a deep hurt that I feel as a mother.

Some days it is a feeling of futility. I remember how carefully I ate when I was pregnant. How patiently I taught my daughter how to safely cross a street. For what, I sometimes wonder, so that she can wheeze through most of her life feeling half her strength and then die of self-poisoning as her grandfather did?

Whither tobacco? But finally, one must feel empathy for the tobacco plant itself. For thousands of years it has been venerated by Native Americans as a sacred medicine. They have used it extensively—its juice, its leaves, its roots, its (holy) smoke—to heal wounds and cure diseases, and in ceremonies of prayer and peace. And though the plant as most of us know it has been poisoned by chemicals and denatured by intensive monocropping and is therefore hardly the plant it was, still, to some modern Indians it remains a plant of positive power. I learned this when a Native American family visited with me for a few days recently and the first thing the

man did was sow a few tobacco seeds in my garden.

Perhaps we can liberate tobacco from those who have captured and abused it, enslaving the plant on large plantations, keeping it from freedom and its kin, and forcing it to enslave the world. Its true nature suppressed, no wonder it has become deadly. Maybe by sowing a few seeds of tobacco in our gardens and treating the plant with the reverence it deserves we can redeem tobacco's soul and restore its self-respect.

Besides, how grim, if one is a smoker, to realize one is smoking a slave.

There is a slogan from a battered women's shelter that I especially like: "Peace on earth begins at home." I believe everything does. I think of a slogan for people trying to stop smoking: "Every home a smoke-free zone." Smoking is a form of self-battering that also batters those who must sit by, occasionally cajole or complain, and helplessly watch.

I realize now that as a child I sat by, through the years, and literally watched my father kill himself: surely one such victory in my family, for the rich white men who own the tobacco companies, is enough. ■

©1987 Alice Walker

Alice Walker is author of *The Color Purple*, among other books. Three months after this piece was written her daughter stopped smoking.

Gerald Ford vs. The Nation

Often when officials clash with the news media, the media must invoke the First Amendment in search of support from a skeptical public. Often this sounds to many like selfish advocacy by a special interest, and recognition

righted because the public interest requires freedom to discuss them. Censorship is not necessarily the author's right to sell his fiction, however, even if it

U.S. Nuclear Arms Were Kept in Japan In 50's, Article Says

Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, Aug. 10—An article to appear in next week's issue of *The Nation* magazine says the United States stored nuclear weapons in Japan from 1955 to 1957.

Citing a newly declassified operations manual for nuclear warfare in the Far East, the article says that a spokesman for the foundation, which has assets of nearly \$1 billion, said of the articles, "The nothing new, nothing there." Virtually identical allegations were made last year in several suits brought against the foundation by the late J. Roderick MacArthur, son of the deceased tycoon who

KAL 007: New Questions

It has been more than two years since a Soviet fighter jet shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007 over the Sea of Japan, a tragedy that has led to a series of investigations and a new international agreement on the use of force.

Magazine blasts Iaccoca's role in Liberty project

By William Dunn
News Staff Writer

Statue of Liberty restoration

American." Nielsen said in a phone interview that the \$230 million was based on a thorough examination of the weather-damaged statue and the dilapidated

Nation' Alleges Misconduct Foundation

By Kevin Klase

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NEW YORK

March 17

"Detente from Below: The Relationship between Peace and Human Rights" will be the subject of a public meeting with Yuri and Olga Medvedkov, founding members of the Moscow Trust Group, the independent peace movement in the Soviet Union. Additional speakers: Petra Kelly—West German Green Party (invited), Richard Deats—Fellowship of Reconciliation, Joanne Landy—Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East & West, and Rev. Wm. Sloane Coffin—Riverside Church. 7:00 p.m. Free. Reception to follow. Riverside Church, 120th & Claremont Ave. Sponsored by Fellowship of Reconciliation, Campaign for Peace and Democracy/E&W, Riverside Church Disarmament Program, War Resisters League and MfS/NY. For more info: CPD/EW, POB 1640, NY, NY 10025, (212) 724-1157.

March 26

"Democracy in Latin America: Taking Power Away from the Military," with George Black, Associate Editor of *The Nation*, recently returned from a trip to Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Colombia. Thursday, March 26, 7:30 p.m., New School, 65 5th Ave., Room 205, Sponsored by CPD/EW, Committee on Liberal Studies, Graduate Faculty, the New School. Free. For further info contact CPD/EW, P.O. Box 1640 Cathedral Station, NY, NY 10025. (212) 724-1157.

WASHINGTON

March 18

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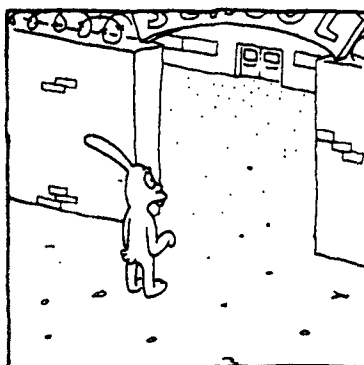
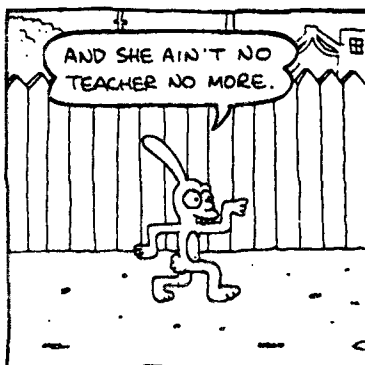
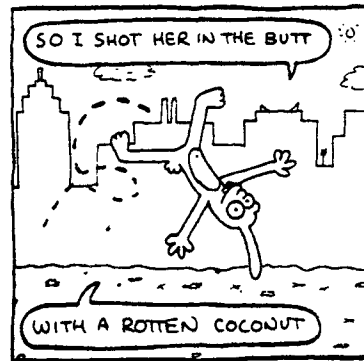
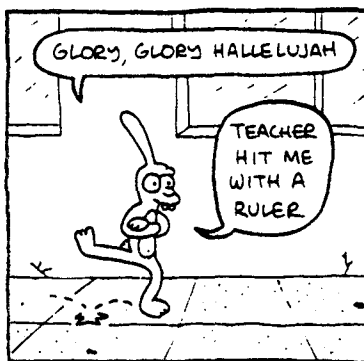
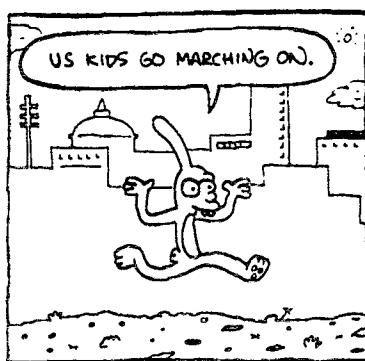
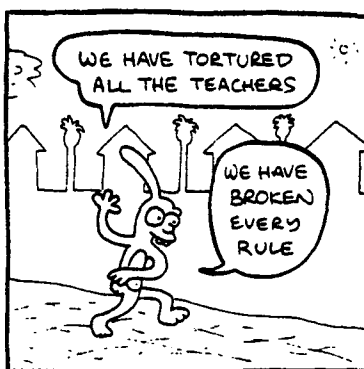
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LIFE IN HELL

THE BATTLE OF HELL

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MATT
GROENING



SLAVERY

ON TOBACCO ROAD

BY
ALICE
WALKER

MY DAUGHTER SMOKES. WHILE SHE IS DOING her homework, her feet on the bench in front of her and her calculator clicking out answers to her algebra problems, I am looking at the half-empty package of Camels tossed carelessly close at hand. *Camels*. I pick them up, take them into the kitchen and study them where the light is better—they're filtered, for which I am grateful. My heart feels terrible. I want to weep. In fact, I do weep a little, standing there by the stove holding one of the instruments, so white, so precisely rolled, that could cause my daughter's death. When she smoked Marlboros and Players I hardened myself against feeling so bad; nobody I knew ever smoked those brands.

She doesn't know this, but it was Camels that my father, her grandfather, smoked. But before he smoked "ready mades"—when he was very young and very poor, with eyes like lanterns—he smoked Prince Albert Tobacco in cigarettes he rolled himself. I remember the bright red tobacco tin, with a picture of Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert, dressed in a black frock coat and frilly shirt, carrying a silverheaded cane and top hat in his hand.

The tobacco was dark brown, pungent, slightly bitter. I tasted it more than once as a child, and the discarded tins could be used for a number of things: to keep buttons and shoelaces in, to store seeds, but best of all, to hold worms for the rare times when my father took us fishing.

Hollywood models: By the late '40s and early '50s no one rolled his own anymore (and few women smoked) in Eatonton, Georgia. The tobacco industry, coupled with Hollywood movies in which both hero and heroine smoked like chimneys, won over completely people like my father who were hopelessly addicted to cigarettes. He never looked as dapper as Prince Albert, though; he continued to look like a poor, overweight,

overworked colored man with too large a family; a black, with a very white cigarette stuck in his mouth.

I do not remember when he started to cough. Perhaps it was small at first. A little hacking and wheezing in the morning as he lit his first cigarette upon getting out of bed. By the time I was my daughter's age, his breath was a wheeze, embarrassing to hear; he could not climb stairs without resting every third or fourth step. It was not unusual for him to cough for an hour.

It is hard to believe there was a time when people did not understand that cigarette smoking is an addiction. I wondered aloud once to my sister—who is perennially trying to quit—whether our father realized this. A smoker since high school herself, I wondered how she viewed her own habit.

It was our father who gave her her first cigarette, one day when she had taken water to him in the fields.

"I always wondered why he did that," she said puzzled, and with some bitterness.

"What did he say?" I asked

"That he didn't want me to go to anyone else for them," she said, "which never really crossed my mind."

So he was aware it was addicting, I thought, though as annoyed as she that he assumed she would be interested.

Tolerating smoke: I began smoking in 11th grade, also the year I drank numerous bottles of terribly sweet, very cheap wine. My friends and I, all boys for this venture, bought our supplies from a man who ran a segregated bar and liquor store on the outskirts of town. Over the entrance there was a large sign that said COLORED. We were not permitted to drink there, only to buy. I smoked Kools, because my sister did. By then I thought her toxic darkened lips and gums glamorous. However, my body simply

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